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TOWN OF ASHFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

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2004 ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES
of the
TOWN OF ASHFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS



for the Year Ending 2004

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This year's Town Report is dedicated to **Dick and Dianne Muller**



At her surprise birthday party not long ago, Dianne Muller spoke of how lucky she and Dick were to have chosen Ashfield. The truth is, in 1972 it was Ashfield that got lucky.

It is hard to think of an aspect of this community that hasn't been somehow touched by Dick and Dianne. Dianne served on the Selectboard for five years, including as its chair. She was on the Sanderson School Committee for over ten years, most of that as its chair. She served on the Planning Board. She was an Associate member of the Zoning Board of Appeals for five years. She served on the Open Space Planning Committee for two years. She was on the Fall Festival Committee for many years, including as its chair. She spent years as an Ambulance dispatcher. She continues to serve on the Van Valkenberg Scholarship Fund Committee

Dick served on the Conservation Commission for 8 years, many of those as chair. He served on the Arts Council for 11 years. He was a Park Commissioner for 3 years, 2 of those as chair. He served on the Long Range Planning Committee. He

was a volunteer firefighter. As a member of statewide and regional commissions and of Trout Unlimited he has worked to protect our lakes, rivers, and streams. For decades the Mullers have reliably attended town functions and meetings, bringing with them a balanced intelligence and a healthy respect for the opinions of others. If help was needed, the Mullers would show up. They have cooked for the Ashfield Dinners and supported *The Ashfield News*. They have exhibited at the Fall Festival, and have worked hard to institutionalize it as an integral part of our town's character. Their civic contributions are too great to recite here. The hours and number of evenings are too numerous to count. Simply put, they have been great citizens.

But their contribution transcends citizenship. They built a life here. They raised their daughters here. They made their livelihood here. All those beautiful leather products that have been sold across the country were "Made in Ashfield." They gardened here. They fished here. It would be hard to find a trail around here they haven't hiked. They have lived, really lived, in Ashfield.

But what's most remarkable is the web of relationships the Mullers have built. Individually and as a couple they've touched the lives of so many that, in a very real way, they've brought us closer together as a community. We have *them* in common. And that is something important, something we mutually cherish and respect. Something good that makes us better.

It is true that the Mullers feel lucky to have landed here in Ashfield, and they should. We all are lucky to call this town our home. But since 1972, Ashfield has been blessed to call them her own, and we are pleased to dedicate the 2005 Annual Report to Ashfielders Dick and Dianne Muller.

UNITED STATES SENATORS

Edward M. Kennedy, Boston
432 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4543
senator@kennedy.senate.gov

John Kerry, Boston
421 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-2742

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS

John W. Olver, Amherst
1027 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2101
202-225-5335

GOVERNOR

Mitt Romney
State House, Room 360
Boston, Massachusetts 02133
617-725-4005
GOffice@state.ma.us

STATE SENATOR

Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr. Pittsfield
Room 213B, State House
Boston, Massachusetts 02133
617-722-1625
Anucifor@senate.state.ma.us

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT

Denis E. Guyer, Dalton
State House, Room 437
Boston, Massachusetts 02133
617-722-2425
Rep.DenisGuyer@hou.state.ma.us

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
425 Main Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
413-774-3167 x 103
lindad@frcog.org

TOWN OFFICERS

The Ashfield Select Board holds regular weekly meetings every Monday evening in the Town Hall at 7:30 pm. Assessors hold regular meetings on the first and third Monday evenings at 7:30 pm.

The following offices are elected positions:

1 YEAR TERMS

Moderator

Stewart Eisenberg

Tree Warden

Thomas Poissant

3 YEAR TERMS

Select Board

Susan B. Todd

Term Expires 2005

Richard M. Chandler

Term Expires 2006

Bill Perlman

Term Expires 2007

Board Of Assessors

Leonard H. Robertson, Chair

Term Expires 2005

Mark D. Graves

Term Expires 2006

Thomas G. Cranston

Term Expires 2007

Finance Committee

Philip E. Pless, Chair

Term Expires 2005

Thomas Gray

Term Expires 2005

Dr. Norman Pike

Term expires 2005

Katharine Nylen

Term expires 2007

Robert Wigmore

Term expires 2007

Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee

Molly Robinson

Term expires 2006

Mary Link

Term expires 2007

Board of Health

Duncan Colter, Chair	Term expires 2005
Edward G. Lagoy	Term expires 2006
John L. Mattis	Term expires 2007

Constables

Donald Bates	Term expires 2006
Elizabeth Lesure	Term expires 2007
John Labelle	Term expires 2007

Park Commissioner

Nina Coler, Chair	Term expires 2007
Amanda Smallwood (resigned 2004)	Term expires 2005
Kurt Myer (appointed 2004)	Term expires 2005
Pat Thayer	Term expires 2006

Sewer Commissioner

Bill Perlman, Chair	Term expires 2005
Thomas Carter	Term expires 2006
Mary Fitz-Gibbon	Term expires 2007

5 YEAR TERMS**Planning Board**

Michael Fitzgerald, Chair	Term Expires 2009
Christopher Farley	Term Expires 2005
Carol Viehmann	Term Expires 2006
Judy Haupt	Term Expires 2007
Steve Sauter	Term Expires 2008
Walter Cudnohufsky (associate)	Term Expires 2005

Library Trustees

Marcine Eisenberg, Chair	Term Expires 2007
Lisa Kerr	Term Expires 2005
Sandra Reynolds (resigned 2004)	Term Expires 2006
Virginia Wiswell	Term Expires 2006
Geoffrey Precourt	Term Expires 2008
Helene Leue	Term Expires 2009

The following offices are filled by Appointment:

Assessor's Assistant

(Term Expires 2007)

Laurie Arruda

Municipal Town Clerk

(Term Expires 2007)

Maryellen Cranston

Town Administrator

(Term Expires 2005)

David Dann (resigned Dec., 2004)

Town Collector

(Term Expires 2007)

Laura Blakesley

Treasurer/Accountant

(Term Expires 2007)

Janet Swem (resigned Dec., 2004)

3 YEAR TERMS**Board of Appeals**

John F. McNiff, Chair (resigned 2004)	June 2004
Savino Basile, Acting Chair	June 2005
Stuart Harris	June 2005
Anne Yuryan, Clerk	June 2006
Stewart Eisenberg, Associate	June 2006

Conservation Commission

Barbara Lagoy, Chair (resigned 2004)	June 2004
Lester Garvin, Chair	June 2007
Phil Lussier	June 2005
Patricia Libby	June 2006
Willis Thayer	June 2007
Megan O'Connor	June 2007
Denise Pavao, Associate	
Elizabeth Stewart, Associate	

Council On Aging

Jean Esser, Chair (resigned 2004)	June 2006
Joanne Ostrowski, Chair	June 2007
Karen Sullivan	June 2005
Sara Clark (resigned 2004)	June 2006
Avis Whitehouse	June 2007

Cultural Council (2 Term Limit)

Nancy Natale, Chair	June 2007
Sarah Holbrook, Treasurer	June 2005
Ron DiDonato, Secretary	June 2006
Peverly Duncan	June 2005
Bob Masla	June 2005
Jane Lund	June 2005
Ruth Craft	June 2007
Peter Healey	June 2007

Historical Commission

	June 2006
	June 2005
John Roske	June 2005
Joanne Ostrawski	June 2006
Mollie Babize	June 2007
Gerard McGovern	June 2007

Personnel Board

Thomas Gray, Chair (Finance Committee representative)	
Susan Todd (Select Board representative)	
David Meier (resigned 2004)	June 2004
Ruth Courtnell (appointed 2004)	June 2007
Barry Scott (resigned 2004)	June 2005
Bob Delaney (appointed 2004)	June 2005
Jan Mahnken	June 2006

Human Relations Commission

Helen Boyden, Co-Chair	June 2006
Jean Ferris, Co-Chair	June 2006
David Chevalier, Secretary	June 2005
Patricia Donohue	June 2007
1 Unfilled Position	

Youth Commission

Roger Lynch, Chair	June 2006
Michael Epstein, Vice-Chair	June 2005
Donna Sarro, Treasurer	June 2006
Abbot Cutler, Secretary	June 2007
Charles Duchin	June 2007
Molly Robinson	June 2005
Matt Arvidson, Youth Rep.	

Registrars of Voters

Ruth Craft	Susan Gambino
Avis Whitehouse	Unfilled Position

Ambulance Service

Douglas Mollison, Director

Fire Chief & Forest Warden

Douglas M. Field

Health Agent

Maxine Schmidt
Foothills Health Dir.

Building Inspector Program

James Hawkins, Building Inspector
Edward F. Marchefka, Wiring Inspector
Andrew French, Plumbing & Gas Inspector

Emergency Manager

Douglas Mollison

Highway Superintendent

Thomas Poissant

Veterans' Agent

Leo Parent

Burial Agent

Thomas Graves

Animal Control Officer

Warren Kirkpatrick

Inspector of Animals

Kim Reardon

Field Drivers

Bill Perlman
Roland E. Townsley

Fence Viewers

Alden Gray
Unfilled position

Superintendent of Schools

Alan Genovese

Surveyor of Wood & Lumber

Ramon R. Sears

Frederick W. Wells Trustee

Molly Robinson

Carl Nilman Scholarship Committee

Sheila Graves

Open Space Committee

Judy Haupt

Richard Chandler

Johanna Pratt

S. Richard Todd

Town Center Land Use Committee

Molly Robinson, Chair

Michael Fitzgerald

Mollie Babize

Stuart Harris

John Baldwin

Tom McCrumm

Ann Browning

John Nawrocki

Jacquelyn Burgin

Elice D. Pieropan

Walter Cudnohufsky

SELECT BOARD

It is not only essential to set goals, it is also essential to look back at those we have set and to reflect on how (or if) we have addressed them. It can be instructive and surprising, as well. At a long range-planning meeting in the fall of 2001, a group of people representing our town boards developed this list of priorities in order of importance to those present:

1. Purchase O'Donnell and other lands
2. Construct new emergency building
3. Enlarge Town Offices by adding an extra room
4. Build Highway Garage Complex at the Salt Shed Site
5. Remove Old School and improve ball fields/ recreation on site

That list, of course, represents a moment in time, and of that list we have completed the Sanderson demolition and purchased the O'Donnell land to create a Town Common. The Trustees of Sanderson Academy have improved the ball fields and purchased the Ward Barn to enhance the recreational facilities. We are still grappling with the notion of the town being responsible for buying more land. The Town offices have been renovated, but not enlarged, though there is a plan to increase the police department space in the near future. At this writing we are close to presenting the Highway plans to the Town for proposed construction this summer. We are considering the emergency services issue, but need to complete the highway facility first.

The point here is that this very simple planning process helped the Town enormously in setting goals and priorities for the future. It was our blueprint. We are now ready to enter into this process once again for the next phase of our Town's growth.

Executive Order 418, Open Space, and Commonwealth Capital. Over the past three years the Town has participated in a

number of planning projects, two of which have come to fruition this past year. These include the completion of Executive Order 418 and Open Space planning. We have also submitted a Commonwealth Capital application in order to be eligible for state funding in a number of areas. In addition, the Town has entered into an agreement with Franklin Regional Housing to pursue possible sites and funding for Senior Housing for the time when the Town is ready to proceed.

We are learning the many issues that must be confronted and addressed in these times. How are we going to protect the rural life we so cherish and yet consider the issues of affordable housing for families and seniors, the town's role in preserving agricultural life and open land, and its economic vitality? The course of our Town's future is in our hands.

Personnel Committee. Two years ago the Town voted to establish a Personnel Committee that would develop strong personnel policies to guide our Town employees. This committee has set about to review job descriptions, hiring practices, salary steps, and the myriad of details that enable a Town to guide its employees. Before the vote many people expressed surprise that the Select Board felt the need for this new committee, wondering why the members of the Select Board couldn't handle this task. What has become increasingly clear over recent years is how much any Select Board needs information that comes from a variety of sources. Many of our challenges this year have involved personnel issues, demonstrating dramatically that our firm grasp of these issues is essential to maintaining clear guidelines for those who work for the Town.

Town Administrator. In December our first Town Administrator, David Dann, left his position to return to serve his own town of Shutesbury in the role he had developed so well in Ashfield. We are indebted to David for the graceful way he moved into this Town and carefully developed a model for how a Town Administrator could work in Ashfield. Each Select Board member who has worked with him over the past two and one-half years has realized the enormous difference this position has made

SELECT BOARD

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tribute to its service as the place where our democratic system is enacted.

Many decisions come our way. The wisdom and advice of those around us, along with the presence of clear and accurate factual information, allow us to make those decisions prudently. This can be an arduous process, often a bit untidy, but the more we can listen and ponder the closer we can come to arriving at the right decisions. The overarching qualities that emerge as we reflect upon this process during past year are the very basic ones of collaboration, planning, information gathering, and preparation. We hope these continue to be present as we move forward. We express once again our deep respect and admiration for our citizens and for their essential involvement and participation in our community life.

Respectfully submitted by the Select Board:

Susan Todd, Chair
Richard Chandler
Bill Perlman

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

Account	Balance Forward	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Total	Budget	Actual Expended	Balance Unexpended	Closed to Surplus	Carried Forward
GENERAL GOVERNMENT									
Town Officers		8,100.00			8,100.00	8,100.00			
Selectboard Expenses		400.00			400.00	400.00			
Town Administrator		32,000.00			32,000.00	32,000.00			
Accountant Services		5,000.00			5,000.00	5,000.00			
Reserve Fund		12,000.00	(9,882.99)		2,117.01	0.00	2,117.01	2,117.01	
Accounting Officer		10,000.00			10,000.00	10,000.00			
FRCG Procurement Charge		2,460.00			2,460.00	2,100.00	360.00	360.00	
Assessor's Expenses		57,128.00	10,500.00		67,628.00	55,428.44	12,199.56	1,299.56	10,900.00
Treasurer's Salary		9,785.00			9,785.00	9,785.00			
Treasurer's Expenses		2,590.00			2,590.00	2,590.00			
Collector's Salary		14,420.00	0.03		14,420.03	14,420.03			
Collector's Expense		8,083.00			8,083.00	* 8,065.14	17.86	17.86	
Town Counsel		7,000.00	5,000.00		12,000.00	6,799.92	5,200.08	1,700.08	3,500.00
Tax Title Expenses		1,400.00			1,400.00	501.96	898.04	898.04	800.00
Bonds		1,000.00			1,000.00	880.00	120.00	120.00	
FRCG Core Charge		13,160.00			13,160.00	13,143.66	16.34	16.34	
Municipal Clerk		22,620.00			22,620.00	22,620.00			
Clerk Expenses		1,700.00			1,700.00	1,692.55	7.45	7.45	
Elections		1,600.00			1,600.00	845.45	754.55	754.55	
Registrars of Voters		800.00			800.00	800.00			
Street Lists		1,050.00			1,050.00	800.00	250.00	250.00	
Conservation Comm Expenses		1,705.00	2.74		1,707.74	1,881.74	26.00	26.00	
Planning Board Expenses		1,650.00			1,650.00	1,121.77	528.23	528.23	528.23
Board of Appeals Expenses		650.00			650.00	374.58	275.42	275.42	
Economic Dev 0E418	1,040.00				1,040.00	1,040.00			
FRCG Resource Development		500.00			500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	
O'Donnell Land Purchase	4,775.00				4,775.00	250.00	4,525.00		4,525.00
Town Office Expenses		4,790.00			4,790.00	4,591.56	198.44	198.44	
Office Supplies		5,100.00			5,100.00	3,920.51	1,179.49	1,179.49	

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

Account	Balance Forward	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Total	Budget	Actual Expended	Balance Unexpended	Closed to Surplus	Carried Forward
Postage		1,000.00			1,000.00	905.85	94.15	94.15	
Computer/Internet Expenses		1,000.00				1,286.78	713.22	713.22	
Town Hall Maintenance		3,775.00	1,000.00		1,000.00	5,840.46	1,434.54	1,434.54	
Town Hall Utilities		9,500.00	3,500.00		3,500.00	8,875.08	624.92	624.92	
Town Hall Painting	16,509.35	2,000.00			18,509.35	8,980.78	9,528.57	9,528.57	
Town Hall Renovations	7,901.90				7,901.90	1,521.21	6,380.69	6,380.69	
Ins-Town Bldgs/Equipment		25,000.00			25,000.00				
Town Reports		2,600.00			2,600.00	578.63	2,021.37	2,021.37	
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	30,226.25	271,566.00	10,119.78	311,912.03	261,941.10	49,970.93	13,808.44	13,808.44	36,162.49
PROTECTION & FIRE									
Police Chief Salary		40,606.00			40,606.00				
Police Dept Expenses		51,914.00	1,298.00		53,212.00	53,212.00			
Police Dept Fuel Expenses		4,000.00	263.45		4,263.45	4,242.55	20.90	20.90	
Police Dept Utilities		2,400.00			2,400.00	1,191.54	1,208.46	1,208.46	
Fire Chief Salary		1,750.00			1,750.00	1,750.00			
Fire Dept Expenses		23,135.00	5,071.60		28,206.60	28,203.36	3.24	3.24	
Fire Dept Fuel Expenses		950.00	220.00		1,170.00	1,080.46	89.54	89.54	
Fire Dept Utilities		7,434.00	(220.00)		7,214.00	6,789.63	424.37	424.37	
Fire Protection		550.00			550.00	549.84	0.16	0.16	
Fire Chief Expenses		400.00			400.00	383.73	16.27	16.27	
Federal Fire Grant Match	852.00	5,400.00			6,252.00	4,752.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Ambulance Fuel Expenses		500.00			500.00	338.30	161.70	161.70	
Blkg/Plumb/Wiring Inspector		26,173.00	0.13		26,173.13	26,173.13			
Emergency Manager Expenses		300.00			300.00		300.00	300.00	
Animal Control Officer Salary		1,339.00			1,339.00				
Animal Control Officer Expenses		550.00			550.00	482.01	67.99	67.99	
Tree Warden Salary		300.00			300.00	300.00			
Tree Service		6,500.00			6,500.00	6,340.00	160.00	160.00	
Drug/Alcohol Testing		800.00			800.00	90.00	710.00	710.00	
Inspector of Animals		350.00			350.00	350.00			
TOTAL PROTECTION & FIRE	852.00	175,351.00	6,633.18	182,836.18	178,173.55	4,662.63	3,162.63	3,162.63	1,500.00

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

Account	Balance Forward	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Total	Budget	Actual Expended	Balance Unexpended	Closed to Surplus	Carried Forward
<u>EDUCATION</u>									
School Committee Salaries		1,350.00			1,350.00	1,275.00	75.00	75.00	
MTRSD Assessment		1,380,032.00			1,380,032.00	1,380,032.00			
Vocational Assessments		215,338.00	(38,778.87)		176,559.13	108,423.97	68,135.16	68,135.16	
TOTAL EDUCATION	0.00	1,596,720.00	(38,778.87)		1,557,941.13	1,488,730.97	68,210.16	68,210.16	0.00
<u>PUBLIC WORKS AND FACILITIES</u>									
FRCC Engineering		1,200.00			1,200.00	-	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Highway Supt Salary		41,405.00			41,405.00	41,405.00			
Sidewalk Clerk of Works	4,000.00				4,000.00	4,000.00			
General Highway Expenses		118,850.00	7,156.45		126,006.45	125,984.45	22.00	22.00	
Highway Fuel Expenses		21,500.00			21,500.00	18,012.07	3,487.93	3,487.93	
Highway Utilities		6,550.00			6,550.00	5,301.37	1,248.63	1,248.63	
Machinery Expenses		69,460.00			69,460.00	68,646.70	813.30	813.30	
Winter Roads		106,000.00	12,834.87		118,834.87	118,834.87			
Street Lighting		3,600.00			3,600.00	2,685.98	914.02	914.02	
Highway Shed Design	40,000.00				40,000.00	11,800.00	28,200.00		28,200.00
Highway Truck	40,000.00				80,000.00	79,921.00	79.00	79.00	
Transfer Station Expenses		73,700.00	4,189.80		77,889.80	77,889.80			
Transfer Station Utilities		800.00			800.00	696.21	103.79	103.79	
Hilltown Man Resource Coop		6,944.00			6,944.00	6,466.37	477.63	477.63	
Landfill Testing	19,250.00				19,250.00	16,725.26	2,524.74	2,524.74	
Water District Fees		2,000.00			2,000.00	2,000.00			
Care of Soldiers Graves		1,000.00			1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00	
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	103,250.00	493,009.00	24,181.12		620,440.12	580,369.08	40,071.04	9,346.30	30,724.74
<u>HUMAN SERVICES</u>									
Board of Health Salaries		1,350.00			1,350.00	1,350.00			
Board of Health Expenses		600.00			600.00	236.81	363.19	363.29	
Foothills Health District		13,591.00			13,591.00	13,083.12	507.88	507.88	
COA Consortium		11,413.00			11,413.00	11,413.00			
COA Local Expenses		500.00			500.00	352.82	147.18	147.18	
COA Van Expenses		1,000.00			1,000.00	973.21	26.79	26.79	

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

Account	Balance Forward	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Total	Budget	Actual Expended	Balance Unexpended	Closed to Surplus	Carried Forward
Youth Commission Program		10,000.00			10,000.00	9,999.89	0.11	0.11	
Veterans' Benefits		1,000.00			1,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00	
Veterans' Center		2,555.00			2,555.00	2,555.00			
Human Relations Council		500.00			500.00	500.00			
TOTAL HUMAN SERVICES	0.00	42,509.00	0.00		42,509.00	40,463.85	2,045.15	2,045.25	0.00
<u>CULTURE AND RECREATION</u>									
Belding Mem Library		30,589.00			30,589.00	30,589.00			
Parks & Beach Expenses		14,350.00			14,350.00	14,283.83	66.17	66.17	
Belding Park Restoration	67,636.43	10,000.00			77,636.43	3,600.00	74,036.43		74,036.43
Historical Commission Expenses		475.00			475.00	207.49	267.51	267.51	
Memorial Day		800.00			800.00	380.00	440.00	440.00	
Local Cultural Council		500.00			500.00	500.00			
TOTAL CULTURE & RECREATION	67,636.43	56,714.00	0.00		124,350.43	49,540.32	74,810.11	773.88	74,036.43
<u>DEBT SERVICE</u>									
Sewer Debt-Principal		23,203.00	0.14		23,203.14	23,203.14			
Sewer Debt-Interest		13,280.00			13,280.00	13,253.57	6.43	6.43	
Interest Short Term Debt		5,000.00			5,000.00		5,000.00	5,000.00	
TOTAL DEBT SERVICE	0.00	41,483.00	0.14		41,483.14	36,456.71	5,006.43	5,006.43	0.00
<u>INTERGOVERNMENTAL EXPENSES</u>									
C of Mass-RMV Surcharge		1,740.00			1,740.00	1,420.00	320.00	320.00	
C of Mass-Air Pollution		404.00			404.00	404.00			
C of Mass-Regional Transit		501.00			501.00	501.00			
TOTAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL	0.00	2,645.00	0.00		2,645.00	2,325.00	320.00	320.00	0.00
<u>MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES</u>									
Retirement System Contribution		58,737.00			58,737.00	57,302.44	1,434.56	1,434.56	

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

Account	Balance Forward	Original Budget	Budget Revisions	Total	Budget	Actual Expended	Balance Unexpended	Closed to Surplus	Carried Forward
Workers Comp Insurance		12,309.00			12,309.00	12,309.00			
Unemployment Compensation		2,500.00	21.05		2,521.05	2,521.05			
Health Insurance		65,000.00	(1,950.00)		63,050.00	61,387.12	1,662.88	1,662.88	
Medicare		7,500.00			7,500.00	7,154.38	345.62	345.62	
Employee Training		400.00			400.00	25.00	375.00	375.00	
Longevity Payments		800.00			800.00	800.00			
Employee Sick Leave	9,961.54	4,414.00			14,375.54	3,077.50	11,298.04		11,298.04
Employee Vacation/Pers/Holiday	3,534.66	19,000.00	464.13		22,998.79	22,998.79			
Employee Uniforms		2,500.00	607.47		3,107.47	3,107.47			
Retiree Health Benefit		6,000.00			6,000.00	5,791.83	208.17	208.17	
Prior Year Expense			2,821.40		2,821.40	2,821.40			
Transfer to Stabilization		80,000.00			80,000.00	80,000.00			
Transfer to Capital Projects			7,000.00		7,000.00	7,000.00			
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS	13,496.20	259,160.00	8,964.05	281,620.25	281,620.25	266,295.98	15,324.27	4,026.23	11,298.04
TOTAL EXPENSES	215,460.88	2,939,137.00	11,119.40	3,165,717.28	3,165,717.28	2,905,296.56	260,420.72	106,699.12	153,721.70

TOWN CLERK

The Town Clerk's office had another busy year. The Help America Vote Act was implemented for the first time during the 2004 Presidential Election. In spite of the added burden the election workers had in following this new law, everything went smoothly and the lines were no more than a few minutes wait to vote.

I graduated from the New England Municipal Clerks' Institute in August. During one week sessions attended over three years, I took part in 100 hours of class time that will count towards my certification on the state and national level. I still need educational credits and to take a test for both those goals to become a reality.

One of the special highlights of the year was the Mock Town Meeting that was held with Allyson Patch's fifth grade class at Sanderson Academy. The children gained an understanding of the value of Town Meeting and by reading from an 1857 warrant, they learned to appreciate Town Meeting's historical connection. Preserving our history became an important goal for this office and will continue to be one in the coming years.

Special thanks to the Finance Committee for providing a \$500 grant from the Mary Priscilla Howes Fund to start making records preservation a reality. This money was used to begin the project of revamping the storage of our vital records. By purchasing acid free binders and sheets, our vital records will no longer have to be handled or potentially lost.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this office during the past year.

Statistics

PEOPLE: In 2004, there were 13 births, 16 marriages and 8 deaths recorded in this office. The population, as of the January 2004 street list was 1729.

DOGS: A total of 412 dog licenses were issued in 2004.

FISHING &

HUNTING: A total of 144 fishing and hunting licenses and stamps were issued in 2004.

FEES: A total of \$1987.17 in fee income was paid to the General fund from July 1, 2003 thru June 30, 2004.

ELECTIONS: In the Presidential Primary on March 2, 2004, there were 381 votes cast of 1138 registered voters for a 33% turnout.

In the Local Election on May 1, 2004, there were 226 votes cast of 1163 registered voters for a 19% turnout.

In the State Primary on September 14, 2004, there were 138 votes cast of 1201 registered voters for an 11% turnout.

In the Presidential Election on November 2, 2004, there were 1104 votes cast of 1267 registered voters for an 87% turnout.

Respectfully submitted,
Maryellen Cranston
Town Clerk

ASHFIELD BURIAL GROUND ASSOCIATION

Supplemental To Town Clerk's Report

Burials In Ashfield Cemeteries

January 1, 2004 to December 31, 2004

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Date of Burial</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>
Henry B. Scarborough	2/2/2004	5/1/2004	Plain
Arthur H. Graves	3/11/2004	5/8/2004	Plain
Douglas A. Ward	2/16/2004	5/8/2004	Plain
Raymond E. Ward Jr.	3/20/2004	5/8/2004	Plain
Frank S. Geryk, Sr.	5/29/2004	6/2/2004	Plain
Mabelle (Tatro) Jordan	6/6/2004	6/10/2004	Plain
Henry F. Wiitanen	2/3/2003	6/20/2004	Plain
Betty Ann (Shaw) Scott	6/19/2004	6/24/2004	Plain
Mary L. (Lynch) Bickford	7/27/2004	8/14/2004	Plain
Robert H. Gray	9/19/2004	9/21/2004	Plain
Doris E. Howes	1/18/2004	11/6/2004	Hill
Robert K. Kuhns	11/23/2004	11/27/2004	Brier Hill

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Graves

Burial Agent

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

The total preliminary valuation for Fiscal '04 was \$146,896,971 an increase of \$8,482,969 (.09%) over the prior year's valuation of \$138,414,002. Our tax rate was \$15.23 per \$1,000 of valuation, a decrease of \$0.61 (.03%) over last year's tax rate of \$15.84. For FY04, it was necessary to raise \$3,153,072.57 by taxation, an increase of \$960,594.78 over the prior year's tax levy of \$2,192,477.79.

Summary of Monies Raised by Taxation and Receipts

	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04
1. Total amount to be raised	\$ 2,713,042.80	3,102,628.98	3,129,475.82	3,153,072.57
2. Receipts				
A. From State	351,843.00	312,851.00	284,199.00	247,517.00
B. Local	244,800.00	270,680.00	276,000.00	259,000.00
C. Available Funds				
1. Free Cash	0	195,449.40	192,400.00	257,513.13
2. Other Available Funds	\$ 129,523.84	223,500.00	184,399.03	151,801.58
D. Subtotal A. B. C	726,166.84	1,002,480.40	936,998.03	915,831.71
3. Annual Tax Levy (1-2D)	\$ 1,988,875.96	2,100,148.58	2,192,477.79	2,237,240.86
4. Total Property Value	124,960,752.00	127,050,731.00	138,414,002.00	146,896,971.00
5. Tax Rate/\$1000 Value (3/4x1000)	\$ 15.90	16.53	15.84	15.23

Summary of Levy Limits, Overrides and Debt Exclusions

	FY01	FY02	FY03	FY04
Previous Year Levy 1,383,451	\$ 1,601,547.00	not available	1,798,065	1,871,634
(Minus Exclusions)				
+ Previous Year Unused Levy Capacity	\$ 38,362.00	87,777	not available	14,722
+2.5% of Previous Year Levy Limit	44,789	47,166	49,250	50,882
+ New Growth	50,266	36,209	16,010	55,305
Override	0	0	0	0
 New Levy Limit	 1,886,627	 1,970,002	 2,035,262	 2,141,449
+ Exclusions	190,025	not available	171,937	163,628
Maximum Levy	2,076,652	not available	2,207,199	2,305,077
- Actual Levy				
-	\$ 1,988,875.00	\$ 2,100,148.00	2,182,477	2,237,240
 Unused Levy Capacity	 \$ 87,777.00	 not available	 14,722	 67,767

Respectfully submitted,
Leonard H. Roberts, Chair
Mark D. Graves
Thomas G. Cranston

TOWN COLLECTOR

Personal Property taxes

Levy of 2004		71807	378	64112	7317	7317
Levy of 2003	1620		5	912	703	703
Levy of 2002	850		43	218	589	589
Levy of 2001	438			137	301	301
Levy of 2000	864		1	77	786	786
Prior years	587		179	108	300	300
total	4359	71807	606	65564		9996

Motor Vehicle Excise taxes

Levy of 2004	-	139398	1420	129990	7988	7988
Levy of 2003	6134	23120	1376	25974	1904	1904
Levy of 2002	2664	998	122	2193	1347	1347
Levy of 2001	1161			282	879	879
Levy of 2000	1352		-504	146	1710	1710
Prior years	1272	42	23	143	1148	1148
TOTAL	12583	163558	2437	158728		14976

Respectfully submitted,
 Laura Blakesley
 Town Collector

TREASURER'S REPORT

RECONCILIATION OF TREASURER'S CASH
Year Ending June 30, 2004

Balance of Cash at July 1, 2003:	\$1,498,154.76
Cash Received:	\$3,622,688.30
Cash Disbursements:	\$3,485,552.43
Balance of Cash at June 30, 2004:	\$1,635,290.63

Balance consists of:

Bank of Western Massachusetts

General Fund Checking	-\$63,240.93
General Fund Money Market	\$189,865.79
Fred Cross-Library Trust Fund	\$5,000.00
Fred Cross-Cemetery Trust Fund	\$2,000.00
Consolidated Trust Funds	\$160,603.20
Septic Repair Program Acct	\$56,356.07
Stabilization Fund	\$432,618.96
Cemetery Trust Funds	\$1,250.00

Florence Savings Bank

Fred Cross Trust Fund	\$56,987.61
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M.M.D.T.

General Fund	\$383,004.44
Mary Priscilla Howes Trust Fund	\$16,183.16

Bank of America

General Fund	\$28,842.80
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Greenfield Co-operative Bank

General Fund	\$201,207.47
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UniBank for Savings

General Fund	\$164,612.06
	\$1,635,290.63

Presentation of Cash:

General Fund:	\$830,430.91
Special Revenue Funds:	\$68,930.03
Enterprise Fund:	\$75,224.19
Capital Projects Fund:	-\$13,937.53
Stabilization Fund:	\$432,618.96
Trust Funds:	\$242,024.07
Total:	\$1,635,290.63

Note: Income also received to benefit Belding Park and Belding Library from the Milo Belding Jr Endowment, held by the trustees of Bank of America.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Another year is past and it is time to give the Fire Department's annual report to the townspeople.

The department has had another busy year. We have not had as many fires and emergency's this year, but they have been major fires and serious auto accidents. I would like to say thank you to everyone that helped out at the major fire on Main Street (the Belding Mansion). When the department has a fire like that, it is great that the townspeople come out to help the firefighters and the residents.

With the ambulance now part of Highland Ambulance service, you will see our small fire truck and firefighters coming to your medical emergency. This is state law. If you see an Ashfield firefighter, you will know that the ambulance is there or will be right behind them.

The Firefighter Association has worked hard this year making the military pickup into a brush truck to fight the grass and brush fires that we have. All the town has had to pay for was the fuel and the insurances. The Association raised the rest of the money (\$4200.00). Thank you to the Sanderson Trustees for letting us put the brush truck into their barn for the winter. Also the Assoc. has given back to the fire department what they raised to buy new equipment (\$2250.00). The Association also pays the Little Leagues insurance so they can play baseball.

This year Ashfield lost one of our older residents (Betty Scott). Thanks to her family, there was money given in her memory to the fire department to get new training equipment to help out the firefighter.

The Fire department had 70 calls this year down from 80 of last year. Here are the months, days and time that the department went out the most.

April – Dec	14 each
Fridays	15
3: 00pm – 6: 00 pm	18

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas M. Field
Ashfield Fire Chief

POLICE DEPARTMENT

2004 was a year of transition for the Ashfield Police Department. Chief Kenneth Heim was on disability leave for much of the year. During that time, the Select Board managed the department, while I ran the daily functions as Sergeant. We added new personnel during the year. The following new officers were appointed:

Corporal Steve Girard
Officer Eben Labelle (Ashfield resident)
Officer Joshua Lamay
Officer Kristina Nunez
Officer Nathan Justus (Ashfield resident)

Our Town Clerk, Maryellen Cranston, was hired to assist with clerical duties to allow our officers to spend more time on patrol.

They physical appearance of the station also changed. More room was created when much of the excess in the station was discarded. A counter was created to more easily accommodate the public. Many thanks go to residents Tony Geryk, who built the counter, and Lenny Roberts, who donated the lumber.

While the Ashfield Police Advisory Committee was disbanded during the year, our goal is to maintain communication with the residents in order to address problems and concerns you may have with the department. Each of your officers is committed to maintaining the highest professional and ethical standards while serving you, the residents of Ashfield. On behalf of all the officers, thank you for the support you have given us during this past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Sgt. John Svoboda
Ashfield Police Department

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

It was another busy year for the Highway Dept. The 2003-2004 winter was interesting as winters usually are in our area. We continued our resurfacing program; ten roads received resurfacing and related work. Many road identification signs were made and installed this past year, with more to come this year. Drainage work was done at several locations around town. A new mowing program was put in place this year. And of course the many items, far to many to list that are required to maintain the many miles of road in Ashfield, along with the maintenance of the equipment we use to accomplish our tasks, are done on a daily basis.

July 1, 2004 we received a new truck, a 2005 International 7400. It replaced our 1984 Ford 8000.

At the Transfer Station work is in progress to improve the overall operations of the facility, and meet the needs of a growing town.

We continued to work on design, plans and site preparation for the new Highway Department facility; we hope to be ready to go forward with construction in the near future.

I would like to thank the Fire and Police departments, and the Town Hall staff for all their cooperation. I would like to thank the Selectboard for all of the support they give through the year.

This department could not be what it is without the dedicated, hard working, excellent employees that we are all very fortunate to have working for us. Richard Turner, Jack Clark, Curt Pichette, Warren Kirkpatrick, Alan Taylor, and Eugene Howes, I am very proud to be working with such a fine group of individuals, and I thank you for all you do day after day.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas G. Poissant
Highway Superintendent

BELDING MEMORIAL LIBRARY TRUSTEES

This past year has been a time of strengthening the library to better serve the people of Ashfield today as we look ahead to tomorrow. With the support of the town we initiated long overdue repairs to the roof, ceiling, and walls of the main building. In the new wing, we replaced three windows that were one winter away from rotting.

- Two years ago, in a Long Range Planning Report survey, the Board learned that the community desires:
- more hours—specifically, morning hours (a strong point of interest among senior citizens); more programming—specifically, musical performances; lectures;
- enrichment programs for children;
- book group discussions; more resources—specifically, more books (both fiction and non-fiction), more audio tapes, more video tapes, more computer resources.

The Board feels that it is imperative that the library provides the people of Ashfield with an active, vital institution dedicated to the sharing of information. To keep pace with learning resources requires operating capital. And, to keep the Library open enough hours to provide all people easy regular access is a dollars-and-cents issue as well. The Board has therefore conducted a long examination of its financial resources, hoping to find ways to achieve all these objectives.

The Board also wants the library to create a “commons” environment, to be a place where people meet and interact with others in their community, and a place to participate in public discourse about community issues. To that end we have refurbished the meeting room, and are pleased to report an increase in its use.

All of these are ambitious goals that don’t come without a price tag. In future months, we’ll continue to examine the best

ways to take advantage of our financial resources. We've undertaken a thorough examination of our by-laws and operating traditions to see what adjustments we need to operate more efficiently and more productively in the 21st Century. Speaking of the 21st Century, the Board is working with the Friends to make DSL available to improve internet access at the library.

Trustees of the Belding Memorial Library include Marcine Eisenberg, Geoffrey Precourt, Lisa D. Kerr, Helene Leue and Virginia Wiswell. Special thanks to our Library Director Anne Judson and her staff of Kate Spencer, Eileen Graves, Julia Meservey, Tom Gambino, and Sheralyn Scott. We are also very grateful for the efforts of the Friends of the Library, the wonderful volunteers who generously give of their time, and all the patrons and donors who treasure this invaluable resource to our community.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcine Eisenberg, Chair
*On behalf of the Belding
Memorial Library Trustees*

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

“In a society where individuals are treated as economic units and hope for the future lies in the latest Treasury statistics, the value of a free library should not be underestimated.”

Shirley Anderson in letter to The Financial Times (28 June 1986)

The Belding Memorial Library is a Free Public Library dedicated to providing access to intellectual, educational and recreational information, through books, periodicals, videos, audios and the electronic media. The library has a public access computer available during open hours, as well as a public access copier.

In conjunction with The Western Massachusetts Library System we also provide a revolving collection of materials as well as an extensive interlibrary loan service, with which patrons can draw materials from Massachusetts libraries, and academic institutions, as well as from libraries countrywide.

In the past year the meeting room has been used for approximately 500 hours by many community groups, including The Boy Scouts, The Girl Scouts, The Ashfield Human Relations Council, The Ashfield Burial Association, The Ashfield Cultural Council, Ashfield Theater, The Ashfield Youth Commission, The Society to Benefit Everyone, a Sanderson Academy Parents Group, The Ashfield Scholarship Committee, Shakespeare and Company and The Hilltown Library Group. The Ashfield Cultural Council held a series of lectures given by local artists, writers, poets and novelists.

The library is fortunate in having a very dedicated Friends of the Library Group. The Friends have held programs for children, including a very popular “Pajama Party”, an evening of story telling with refreshments. The Friends provided a pre-Halloween evening of spooky and scarey stories told by Storyteller Rona Leventhal. Daisy Justus gave free Saturday morning classes in Origami paperfolding.

The library is a member of The Hilltown Libraries and The Franklin County Libraries. There are regular meetings with both groups to discuss a wide range of library related issues. With both these groups the library participates in the Library awareness booth at the Franklin County Fair.

This year the library added a CD collection, the core of which came from a copyright infringement suit initiated by the Attorneys General of many states, including Massachusetts. There are currently 152 CD's circulating.

The Joe Donald Art on Loan program provides original artwork for circulation to any library member. The Museum Pass program provides free group entrance to MassMoCA, The Berkshire Museum, The Springfield Quadrangle Museums, The Holyoke Children Museum and Old Deerfield.

Many people have volunteered a total of 694 hours. Thanks to Kurt Meyer for repairing the back door; Herb Geiling for his computer wizardry, Ray and Andrea Sears who spent many hours pruning the overgrown shrubbery, Daisy Justus for the Origami lessons and to Barbara Lagoy, Kate Spencer, Jan Mahnken, Tadea Klein, Maureen Fuller, Julia Meservey, Kyle Meservey, Julianna Meservey and Risa McGovern, for their hours of dedicated and invaluable help. I am grateful to Sharalyn Scott and Eileen Graves for their able assistance.

The library received 320 gift books, audios and videos.
Total circulation for 2004 was 21,835.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne C. Judson
Library Director

FRANKLIN COUNTY BUILDING INSPECTION PROGRAM

Fiscal Year 2004 was the busiest year on record for the Building Inspection Program. The total number of building permits issued in all participating towns was 1,042 – up 120 from 2003. Previously, 2002 was the record year with 974 permits. Total dwelling unit permits were 116, also a record amount for the program, up 32 units from 2003. The previous record was set in 1995 with 100 units. The following participating towns have permit caps for dwelling units: Leverett allows 10, Shutesbury 6, Heath 6, Whately 10. No towns fulfilled their cap limitations. For information on number of permits in your town, please contact the office.

Permit fees collected were also at an all-time high, totaling \$232,192, an increase of \$82,977 from 2003, and an increase of \$64,479 from 2002, which was previously the record. Fees collected were \$60,025 more than the total operation budget figure of \$172,166. The Town of Monroe has left the FCCIP.

A reminder that all of the following work requires a Permit:

- New homes, additions, garages, or storage sheds.
- Interior renovations, involving the cutting away of any wall or structural member.
- Decks and ramps.
- Roofing (when re-roofing more than 25% of existing roof).
- Siding (when re-siding more than 25% of existing house).
- Window or exterior door replacement.
- The installation of swimming pools, hot tubs, or spas.
- Fences over 6 feet height.
- Wood stoves, fireplace inserts, fireplaces, or chimneys.

- Demolition of any existing structure.
- Signs-new or alteration of existing signs.

At the end of Fiscal year 2004 the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program became a program of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. We remain in the same location, and you can still reach us at 772-2026. Our new e-mail addresses are: for the the building commissioner: jhawkins@frcog.org, for the local inspector: jcerone@frcog.org. You will find permits and helpful information on our website at www.fccip.org.

Respectfully submitted,
James D. Hawkins
Building Commissioner

BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED **JULY 1, 2003 TO JUNE 30, 2004**

Town	Permit	Value	Dwell Units	Permit Fees	Cert of Occ	Cert of Insp	CI Fees	Other Fees	Total
Ashfield	85	3,669,661	9	17,075.00	26	7	190.00	0.00	17,265.00
Barnardston	102	5,083,785	18	26,275.00	44	16	498.00	315.00	27,088.00
Buckland	75	3,319,439	5	17,280.00	24	5	177.00	192.00	17,649.00
Charlemont	86	3,119,420	9	17,064.00	20	10	338.00	383.00	17,785.00
Conway	78	3,337,195	8	17,095.00	33	7	145.00	0.00	17,240.00
Erving	81	2,869,715	11	15,080.00	25	17	577.00	263.00	15,920.00
Gill	70	3,183,708	14	16,655.00	18	27	1,271.00	356.00	18,282.00
Hawley	10	518,340	4	2,745.00	3	1	40.00	0.00	2,785.00
Heath	52	1,875,121	5	10,240.00	16	2	0.00	0.00	10,240.00
Leverett	96	4,156,877	8	20,740.00	29	12	316.00	0.00	21,056.00
Leyden	29	1,340,441	7	6,940.00	9	5	226.00	0.00	7,166.00
Monroe	12	105,695	1	855.00	0	0	0.00	119.00	974.00
Shelburne	101	3,764,465	5	19,905.00	21	36	1,421.00	601.00	21,927.00
Shutesbury	78	2,465,549	4	12,955.00	30	6	170.00	0.00	13,125.00
Whately	87	4,547,639	8	23,309.00	37	11	381.00	0.00	23,690.00
TOTALS	1042	43,357,050	116	224,213.00	335	162	5,750.00	2229.00	232,192.00

FRANKLIN COUNTY PLUMBING/GAS INSPECTOR PROGRAM

The enclosed report is for Fiscal Year 2004 and reflects Plumbing/Gas permits and fee activity for all member towns. For more information on activity in your town, please contact the office. A review of the number of permits and fees collected each fiscal year for the last 5 years shows the following:

FY 2000	559	27,185.00
2001	599	34,722.00
2002	631	36,357.00
2003	589	43,580.00
2004	574	44,436.00

I would like to take this opportunity to remind town residents that permits are required for replacing electric water heaters. You will find permits, fee schedules, and helpful information on our web site at: www.fccip.org.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2004 the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program became a program of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. We remain in the same location, and you can reach us 772-2026, ext. 125. My new e-mail address is: plumbing@frcog.org. We welcome the Town of Gill into our program and sadly say goodbye to the Town of Monroe. Once again, I would like to extend my appreciation to all town officials for your cooperation and assistance during the past year.

Sincerely,
Andrew French
Plumbing/Gas Inspector

FRANKLIN COUNTY ELECTRICAL PROGRAM

The enclosed report is for Fiscal Year 2004 and reflects Wiring permits and fee activity for all member towns. For more information on activity in your town, please contact the office. A review of the number of permits and fees collected each fiscal year for the last 5 years shows the following:

FY 2000	713	45,602.00
2001	688	46,264.00
2002	607	43,418.00
2003	597	44,961.00
2004	629	51,460.00

I would like to take this opportunity to remind town residents that all electrical work requires an inspection. You will find permits, fee schedules, and helpful information on our web site at: www.fccip.org.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2004 the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program became a program of the Franklin Regional Council of Governments. We remain in the same location, and you can reach us 772-2026, ext. 126. My new e-mail address is: edmarchefka@frcog.org. We welcome the Town of Gill into our program and sadly say goodbye to the towns of Monroe, Wendell and Northfield. Once again, I would like to extend my appreciation to all town officials for your cooperation and assistance during the past year.

Sincerely,
Edward F. Marchefka
Electrical Inspector

PLUMBING/GAS PERMITS ISSUED 7/1/2003-6/30/2004

Town	Reinspection Fees	Permits	Amount
Ashfield	30	68	4055
Bernardston	0	48	4153
Buckland	25	45	3970
Charlemont	20	43	3865
Conway	80	62	3601
Erving	0	24	2057
Gill	0	0	0
Hawley	0	15	1260
Heath	0	29	1985
Leverett	30	101	7323
Leyden	0	25	1573
Monroe	0	1	10
Northfield	0	0	0
Shelburne	25	54	5467
Shutesbury	0	0	0
Wendell	0	0	0
Whatley	87	59	4820
TOTALS	297	574	44,139

WIRING PERMIT FEES ISSUED 7/1/2003 - 6/30/2004

Town	Reinspection Fees	Permits	Amount
Ashfield	40	50	4170
Bernardston	0	60	5130
Buckland	0	48	4020
Charlemont	0	39	3485
Conway	0	51	3625
Erving	30	46	3530
Gill	0	0	0
Hawley	0	13	1005
Heath	30	25	1805
Leverett	60	74	6544
Leyden	0	0	0
Monroe	0	2	80
Northfield	40	85	6560
Shelburne	0	58	4760
Shutesbury	0	0	0
Wendell	0	22	1610
Whatley	0	56	4936
TOTALS	200	629	51,260

ANIMAL CONTROL

This year has been busier than usual regarding the bear population in Ashfield. There were several calls to me about bears on resident's porches, in their homes and generally making a pest of themselves. Bears are large powerful animals and they should be well respected and given plenty of consideration, if encountered. Bears now seem to be unafraid of human, unlike a few years ago. This is due in part to the lack of bear hunters or natural predators. If anyone has a question or concern about bears, contact myself or the Environmental Police.

The rabies situation is still serious in the area. We have sent several specimens to Boston for tests. Some were positive and some were not. The rabies is here and creatures with hair or fur can catch rabies, including humans. If anyone sees an animal acting suspicious don't go near it and should contact me as soon as possible.

As a reminder, all dogs six months and older must be licensed by April 1st of each year. In order to obtain a dog license, an up-to-date rabies certificate must be presented to the town clerk. Cats six months or older are also required by state law to have an up-to-date rabies shot. Any animal that has hair or fur should be vaccinated against rabies. In addition, Ashfield has a year-round restraining order. Dog owners are fully responsible for all expenses resulting from damages done by an unrestrained dog.

I want to thank all the people and organizations that have supported and assisted me in performing my duties as the Ashfield Animal Control Officer. Anyone having questions or concerns can reach me at 628-3811. All lost and found notices are posted at the Post Office and at Neighbor's Store.

Dogs Confined	4	Phone calls	1594
Dogs Placed	4	Mileage	572
Cats Confined	2	Labor	628 hrs
Cats Placed	2	Fines Collected	\$ 10
Other Animals confined	1	Kennel Expenses	\$370.71
Animal Bites	3		

Respectfully submitted,
Warren Kirkpatrick

COUNCILS ON AGING CONSORTIUM

The Councils on Aging Consortium, comprised of the Councils on Aging from the towns of Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, and Shelburne, oversees the services and activities of the Shelburne Senior Center located at 7 Main Street, Shelburne Falls. The Shelburne Senior Center offers a wide range of services to the senior residents of Ashfield, Buckland, Colrain, and Shelburne including health, exercise, social, nutritional, educational, transportation, cultural, and recreational services. There are approximately 1500 seniors, 60 years of age and older, who live within the four town area.

In addition to the services listed above, the Senior Center also provides Outreach and Information & Referral services to seniors and their families, as well as caregivers support services. The Senior Center serves as a focal point for linking services to the needs of elders. Information & Referral requests are handled on a daily basis, particularly in the areas of health insurance, housing, legal services, prescription drug programs, nursing and rest homes, home care services, transportation, fuel-assistance, meals-on-wheels and protective services.

A demand-response transportation system, which is funded by a contract with the F.R.T.A., operates out of the Senior Center and provides access to essential services such as medical appointments and shopping, as well as rides to the Senior Center for meals and other activities.

Through its community services, programs and activities, the Senior Center seeks to maximize the coordination and utilization of services and activities to help keep seniors healthy, independent, and active in their community, and to avoid premature institutionalization.

Listed below are some of the Senior Center's new activities and projects that were initiated or improved during 2004:

This was the second complete year for the Senior Center's monthly newsletter. Twelve issues were published and mailed to almost every elder resident in the four-town area. The newsletter

is supported by grants, funds from advertisers, and donations from individuals.

The computer lab with its 5 computer work-areas was upgraded to include new monitors and a new high speed DSL Internet system, courtesy of the Friends of the Shelburne Senior Center. Beginner computer classes were provided on an on-going basis.

The relatively new volunteer driver program, in its third year of operation, offered many more rides in 2004 than in the previous year, and included rides to medical facilities outside of Franklin County. The volunteer driver program supplements the FRTA van transportation service.

Several new activities were offered to senior participants during the year. This includes a walking group, a singing group, an evening quilting class, a yoga class, and a new computer class entitled "Health on the Internet".

Thirty-one special events, i.e. cultural talks, health talks, educational forums, and musical performances, were offered at the Senior Center during the year.

The Councils on Aging Consortium organized a community health and wellness educational conference at the Shelburne/Buckland Community Center that featured 50-area vendors.

This was the second full year for the successful Caregivers Support Group that meets twice a month. This project was expanded to include a "respite group" comprised of those being taken care of by the people in the Caregivers Support Group.

Much thanks goes to the Senior Center staff and to the approximately 100 Senior Center volunteers, including members of the Councils on Aging Consortium, for their hard work and dedication in serving the seniors of the 4-town service area and in making 2004 a most successful year.

Council on Aging Chairpersons

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Ostrowski, Ashfield

Pat Kerrins, Shelburne

Neil Katz, Director

Ruth Anderson, Buckland

Elizabeth Wells, Colrain

CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Ashfield Cultural Council, a local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, awarded 13 grants totaling \$2,685 for the 2005 fiscal year. The grants will contribute to funding for projects planned to enrich the cultural life of residents in and around Ashfield. The Local Cultural Councils of Massachusetts support projects in visual and performing arts, humanities and sciences.

The new grants include the following: Ashfield Community Theater – Summer Arts Camp, Pilgrim Theatre/Ashfield Young People’s Theatre – 2005 theatre season, Preston Browning – symposium “Restoring the Earth as Home: Heart, Hope and Habitat,” Hilltown Folk Concert Series – 2005 concert series, Rona Leventhal – “Haunts, Haints and Hollers: Stories for a Halloween Eve,” Martha Lively – Jazz/Funk Dance Class at Sanderson Academy, The Mohawk Trail Concerts – 2005 Summer Festival, Sanderson Academy – PASS Grant for performances at UMass Fine Arts Center, Shelburne Senior Center – Creative Writing Workshops and Painting Classes, Slate Roof Publishing Collective – launching a collective press for Franklin County poets, Western Mass Arts Alliance – Arts E-Newsletter for Western Massachusetts.

In addition, the MCC approved part of Ashfield’s funds being spent to provide stipends for “Ashfield Winter Evenings,” a series of presentations organized by the Ashfield Cultural Council. (See more information below.)

State funds for local cultural councils were level-funded this year at the much-reduced appropriation set in 2003. Small towns such as Ashfield receive just \$2000 to distribute. This amount was supplemented by \$500 from the Town of Ashfield and there was a balance left from the prior year.

Last year the Ashfield Cultural Council took a proactive role to maximize the limited funds available by organizing a series of

six evenings in which local writers and artists presented their work at the Belding Library. A small stipend was provided to each of the presenters from ACC funds. Hoping to repeat last year's success, the ACC plans to fill the winter cultural vacuum again in 2005 with a new series of presentations called "Ashfield Winter Evenings." This winter, the series will pair two presenters on a related topic or devote an entire evening to different aspects of one presenter's work. The series will be held at the Belding Library between January 12th and March 30th. More information about the local cultural council program may be obtained at the Massachusetts Cultural Council website: <http://www.mass-culture.org>.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Natale, Chair

Ron DiDonato, Secretary

Sarah Holbrook, Treasurer

Members: Ruth Craft

Beverly Duncan

Peter Healey

Jane Lund

THE FOOTHILLS HEALTH DISTRICT

Two thousand four was the last year I will serve as Ashfield's Health Agent at the Foothills Health District. As I told the District Board in my resignation letter last fall, "This has been the hardest, dirtiest, most educational, enjoyable job I have ever had." The best part of these last ten-plus years has been working with the people of Ashfield and the other three towns. I have made many friends here, and I look forward to visiting Ashfield in a "non-official" capacity.

This past years statistics are as follows: perc tests: 30; Title 5 inspections: 19; well permits, 7; septic system permits, 15; food inspections, 4; housing inspections, 16; complaints investigated, 2. The Health Agent collected \$5285.00 for permit and witness fees, which was deposited into the General Fund.

Jackie Duda has been hired as the District's new Health Agent. I am sure you will find her helpful. I hope she will enjoy working here as much as I did.

Please feel free to contact her with any public or environmental health questions. Her usual day in Ashfield will be Monday, as was mine, but she may not always be in the office. She can be reached at 268-8404, or shorter messages can be left at 665-8051.

Respectfully submitted,
Maxine Schmidt
Health Agent

PARK COMMISSION

The past year for the Belding Memorial Park was creative and productive. The effort worth noting was the creation of a master plan of the entire park acreage, with the emphasis being put on the upper park that will eventually be vacated by the Highway Department. With monies set aside over past years for the eventual renovation, the Commission hired the services of the Conway School of Landscape Design. With their help we orchestrated surveys and open meetings to solicit public opinion. Input from citizens was thoughtful and sincere, and based on that input the plan was created. The general consensus of townspeople who responded was to have a natural, low maintenance feeling to the new park lands. We look forward to implementing much of this beautiful plan in the future. The master plan is available for viewing on the first floor of town hall.

As for the day to day operations at the beach and park, the commissioners are gaining knowledge and confidence daily. Our approach to things is to keep things as simple and uncomplicated as possible. We try to use common sense and put in a lot of hours of our own labor. The summer was a safe one. Swim lessons were offered through the YMCA. We would like to thank Helene Leue for helping to organize those. We will offer swim lessons again next summer. We look forward to improvements for next year such as new sand and some tree pruning for added comfort and safety of beach goers. We would hope for a larger budget that would allow for repairs to the facilities before things get too run down.

As always we are eternally grateful to the volunteers that did landscaping, yard work and maintenance. They lighten our load and save hundreds of tax dollars. To mention those that have given generously the most: Doug Cranson, John and Cass Nawrocki, Scott and Noah Decker, Will Thayer, and Ron Coler. Thank you to the Master Plan Steering Committee of Suzanne Taylor, Alden Gray, Cass Nawrocki, Don Lesure, and Kurt Meyer. And thanks to all the citizens who filled out surveys,

attended the meetings, and to those that keep an eye out for things while they enjoy the park. We can always use more help, especially in the spring. To get on a volunteer list, call the Town Administrator and leave your name and phone number. Think about it. Where else can you be raking leaves and have Canada Geese fly only feet above your head as they return in the spring. Our park is a beautiful asset that we hope folks find time to enjoy.

Respectfully submitted,
Nina Anderson Coler, Chair
Patricia Thayer, Secretary
Kurt Meyer

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

The Human Relations Commission (HRC) is pleased to submit its year 2004 Annual Report to the citizens of the town of Ashfield. We thank the community for its support of the goals of promoting continued respect and understanding of the differences among us and of celebrating our diversity.

During this year the HRC co-sponsored two events. One was in conjunction with the personnel of Sanderson Academy and was called, *I Am - I Can - I Belong: An Ability Awareness Exercise* presented by Thomas Bruffee of the United ARC Franklin and Hampshire County. The presentations (presented into different groups according in class) were designed to encourage students to recognize their own abilities and those of their peers and to assist them in recognizing that each of us has our own unique set of abilities and limitations. We sought to recognize that persons with disabilities can and should be included as valued members of their classrooms and communities and that they not be defined solely by their limitations.

The second was generously hosted in the home of John and Mary Snow who joined us in welcoming the Reverend Dr. Gayraud Wilmore, Jr. to an afternoon tea. The title of the event was *A Conversation With the Reverend Dr. Gayraud Wilmore*. Reverend Wilmore is an internationally recognized scholar and is past president of the Society for the Study of Black Religion. However what he shared with us was his direct experience as a man coming through the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960's and the extent to which these issues pervade our culture in new ways and contribute to its contemporary function and dysfunction. He left with us a knowledge that much remains to be done but that much has changed because people care enough to try.

The HRC will meet on an as needed basis in the coming year. We encourage any person to contact one of our Commission members and we will be pleased to schedule and post a meeting date at the Town Hall. All meetings are open and we welcome input from all interested parties.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Ferris, Co-Chair
Helen Boyden, Co-Chair

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission's primary responsibility is to protect wetland resources and buffer zones based on Commonwealth of Massachusetts laws and regulations prepared by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Protection. The Commission works with applicants to guide them through the permitting process and encourages anyone planning projects within 100' of wetland resource areas or 200' from a perennial stream to contact any commission member to arrange a site visit or attend one of our meetings. During the past year Commission members made over 40 site visits. We have the responsibility to sign off on building permit applications relative to wetland resources in the building area. We can save applicants valuable time by being contacted in the early stages of project planning.

The Commission also cooperates with the Commonwealth's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DC&R) to implement the Massachusetts Forest Cutting Practices Act, a law that was enacted to ensure that harvested land will remain in a condition that will not jeopardize the public interest. Filing requirements under the Act are based on volume, cutting areas and use of timber products. For further information about filing requirements contact our regional Service Forester in Amherst at 413-545-5993. The Commission reviews cutting plans to assess forest management practices for stream crossings and the cutting of timber in wetlands and buffer zones.

In 2004 Barbara Lagoy and Elizabeth Stewart retired as Commission members. For many years they served the conservation interests of the town. We miss their background knowledge of the town, understanding of natural resource science and professionalism. Lester Garvin became the Chair in April and a new member, Megan O'Connor, was appointed in October. Megan has a Master of Science Degree in Fisheries Science and has worked in her profession for a national environmental consulting firm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lester Garvin, Chair
Patricia Libby
Phillip Lussier
Megan O'Connor
Willis Thayer

Associate Members
Elizabeth Stewart
Denise Pavao

PLANNING BOARD

The Planning board spent most of the last year either in special permit hearings or researching possible changes to our subdivision control regulations.

The beginning of the year saw the continuation of an application for a stone quarry; this hearing had been extended from 2004. The application was withdrawn without prejudice due to a lack of information.

As the year progressed three special permits for commercial uses within the town center were heard and approved by the board. These consisted of a hair salon, a place to have wedding parties and similar events, and an expansion of an existing business to include a tea room.

The possibility of town center or village zoning continues to arise. The Planning board is interested in any opinions about this that voters may have.

The Executive order 418 study of Ashfield was completed by local planners. The information in this document will be very useful to us as we continue to plan.

As always the planning board continues to receive ANR applications and notices of cottage industry or home occupation.

The planning board meets on the first and third Thursday of each month. All are welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Fitzgerald, Chair
Steve Sauter, Clerk
Carol Viehmann
Judy Haupt
Chris Farley

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The ZBA heard five petitions in 2004. The first case requested a Variance and/or Special Permit to allow the creation of two non-conforming lots to accommodate two existing residences now located on one non-conforming lot. After examining the evidence presented, the Board voted to deny both, being that the proposal did not meet the required criteria delineated in either the Ashfield Zoning Bylaws or MGL Chapter 40A. It was the opinion of the Board that it would have exceeded the Board's authority to grant either request.

The second case of the year requested a Variance and/or Special Permit to allow two separated unattached dwelling units on one conforming lot. The prohibition against more than one unattached dwelling unit on a lot has existed in Ashfield Zoning Bylaws since 1968 and was maintained in the major revision of the bylaws in 1995. The Board was sympathetic to the applicants' proposal but could not find sufficient evidence to meet the required criteria and therefore voted to deny this request.

In August, the Board heard a request for a Special Permit to expand a deck attached to an existing non-conforming structure. After consideration of the evidence presented at the hearing, the Board found that this minimal increase would not significantly increase the degree to which the structure is non-conforming and voted to grant the request for a Special Permit.

In late September, a request for a Special Permit to add a second story addition to an existing non-conforming structure was brought before the Board. This proposal would not increase the footprint of the existing structure or encroach further into the setbacks. Based on the evidence presented, the Board voted to grant this Special Permit owing to the fact that this request would not significantly increase the degree to which the existing structure and use are non-conforming. Neither would it increase the objectionable quality nor be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing non-conforming structure.

Finally in October, the Board heard the last case of 2004 and granted a Variance on a request to place a small garden shed within the rear lot line setback. This is a small non-conforming lot with several physical constraints. After considering the evidence presented, it was the opinion of the Board that the criteria for a Variance were met and a literal interpretation of the bylaws in this case would cause undue hardship.

In June when his term expired, Jack McNiff left the Board after eighteen years of service to the Town. His many dedicated years of service set a high standard for respectful, fair and thoughtful consideration of each petition that came before the Board. We, as a Board, are most grateful for his long perseverance and will miss both his thought-provoking leadership and his intricate knowledge of zoning issues.

Respectfully submitted,
Savino (Sam) Basile, Acting Chair
Anne Yuryan, Clerk
Stuart Harris

YOUTH COMMISSION

My first year as Director of the Ashfield Youth Commission (AYC) has been a vibrant and rewarding experience and I sincerely thank the Commission members and the Town administrators for their energy and support.

This year's summer and winter programs yielded more than 650 event registrations from residents of Ashfield and Plainfield. The Commission has attempted to increase local, low cost activities and these events have been well received. The Ashfield Fire Department has graciously allowed us to use their station for ice cream making and regular movie nights, the Sanderson Academy gymnasium is utilized for sports, Ashfield Hardware sponsored a bicycle clinic, Belding Library offers games nights, and we have activities at Ashfield Lake, Belding Park and our new "Town Common". AYC members have met with the Park Commission and other Ashfield groups to coordinate efforts and further our mission of engaging youth and families in organized activities to strengthen our community. We are currently working on linking a web page to the Town of Ashfield's website to make our program information and registration process more accessible.

The Youth Commission has managed to keep its diverse out-of-town programs affordable and we continue to introduce local youth and families to a variety of new experiences at reduced group rates. This year, AYC offered a golf outing, Red Sox games at Fenway, canoeing, trips to Six Flags, white water rafting, six ski/snowboard trips to Vermont resorts, museum tours, UMASS sports events, mask making at MASS MOCA, a Japanese drumming and dance performance, and trips bowling and to the (ever popular!) malls. We provide \$1,000 in scholarships annually to enable youth of all economic circumstances to participate. The AYC coordinated another successful fundraiser at the Ashfield Fall Festival which helps further our efforts to engage as many local young people as

possible in our numerous programs.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Phil Nolan and staff for being such accommodating “neighbors” throughout the year.

The Commission is most grateful for the support of our Town and our community. This program truly does make a difference and provides a uniquely rich resource to Ashfield.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue B. Larson, Director
Roger Lynch, Chair
Michael Epstein, Vice Chair
Donna Sarro, Treasurer
Abbot Cutler, Secretary
Charles Duchin
Molly Robinson
Matt Arvidson, Youth Rep.

FRED WELLS TRUSTEES REPORT

Funds available for the fiscal year 2004/2005 are \$228,800 (which includes unused scholarship money from 2002/03 that was reallocated to the scholarship fund).

EDUCATION

The trustees received 317 applications for education scholarships and approved 304 students to receive **\$195,800.00**. This amount includes the two \$1,000.00 scholarships in Honor of Ralph and Hilda Haskins. The trustees spent many hours on the selection process to ensure that as many students as possible could receive scholarship aid.

HEALTH

Four (4) health programs were approved totaling	\$22,000.00.
Community Health Center of Franklin County	\$9,000.00
NELCWIT	\$9,000.00
Pastoral Counseling Center	\$2,000.00
Tripp Memorial Foundation	\$2,000.00

AGRICULTURE

An amount of **\$11,000.00** was approved for payment.

Franklin County Agricultural Fair	\$7,055.00
Heath Agricultural Fair	\$3,315.00
Shelburne Grange Fair	\$ 630.00

Respectfully submitted,
Molly J. Robinson
Trustee

MARY PRISCILLA HOWES FUND

The Mary Priscilla Howes Fund was established in 1989 in memory of a much-loved Ashfield resident. The fund is administered by the Finance Committee. Interest from the fund is to be used for cultural and historical projects and events which will benefit the citizens of Ashfield.

This past year the committee received one application for a grant. \$500 was awarded to the Town Clerk towards the ongoing preservation of town birth, marriage and death records. The grant was used to purchase acid-free binders and document sheets. This new system would allow documents to be viewed without being physically touched. This preservation will allow present and future generations to view Ashfield's vital records.

The fund, as of June 30, 2004, had a balance of \$16,183.16. During FY '04. the fund had interest earnings of \$162.68.

Applications for a grant may be obtained at the town office or the finance committee and should be submitted to the finance committee. Grants are awarded in December.

Respectfully submitted,
Philip E. Pless, chair
Norman Pike
Kit Nylen
Thomas Gray
Robert Wigmore

REPORT OF THE TOWN CENTER LAND USE COMMITTEE

At a special Town Meeting on November 17, 2003 the citizens of Ashfield voted to purchase 4.5 acres of undeveloped land to the east and south of Town Hall with additional frontage on Norton Hill Road from the O'Donnell family for \$200,000. In December 2003 the Select Board created a Town Center Land Use Committee whose charge was to research possibilities for the use of this property and to make recommendations. The committee was asked to investigate plans for immediate and long-range land use, determine whether and how to pursue a conservation restriction, develop a fund-raising proposal and schedule public informational meetings at key points in the process.

The committee members were appointed at the December 22nd Select Board meeting. The Committee met sixteen times between January and November, 2004 and also hosted two public forums. We were ably assisted throughout the process by Town Administrator, David Dann. The Committee received three grants from the Highland Communities Initiative Small Grants Program to cover the costs of office and copying expenses, postage, an administrative assistant, delineation of wetlands on a portion of the land and a topographic survey of the land. Barbara Sussbauer was hired as our administrative assistant.

We are very appreciative of the more than 150 comments and suggestions received from townspeople and Ashfield friends by phone, email, in response to our survey leaflet and from those who attended our public meetings. We considered all suggestions.

In summary, here are our conclusions:

The Town Center Land Use Committee recommends a Conservation Restriction to be held by the Franklin Land Trust on approximately 1.5 acres of the Town Center Land. This restriction will include what is generally thought of as the Fall

Festival field and a portion of the hill to the south, including land up to a line fifty feet east of the current fire house. This line continues to the south until it meets the property line. We recommend reserving the remaining land—approximately three acres behind Town Hall with frontage on Norton Hill—for future Town needs.

The O'Donnell Field has been described as the “heart” of Ashfield. It is the core of the Ashfield Plain Historic District. For generations, this central open space has been the site of numerous town festivals, musical events, organized recreation and informal gatherings. The field and adjacent hillside are framed by historic, civic, religious and residential buildings. Views across and through the field are a key part of Ashfield's identity and sense of place. Though in private ownership until 2004, the O'Donnell family had generously allowed this green to serve as the Town Common, a flexible space where the community could come together to celebrate, to play, or quietly to enjoy its peaceful and open character.

It is the intention of the conservation restriction that this open space remain flexible and unencumbered by permanent structures, monuments, ornamental gardens and the like. Maintenance of the restricted area, including mowing, pruning, planting, grading and repair of the land, would be allowed only insofar as it supports ongoing use by the community and keeps the common in good repair. The simple aesthetic of this open green is the character-defining feature of the Ashfield town center, and we recommend that it be maintained as it is.

The Town Center Committee further recommends allowing the replacement of canopy trees with non-invasive, native species and also the replacement of apple trees on the upper level. Pruning and removal of trees as necessary should also be permitted as would be two benches on the upper plateau overlooking the field. The Committee discussed at some length the need for benches on the lower level for those who could not climb the hill. Paraphrasing Archibald MacLeish, it was said that “community is a meeting of the minds in the streets.” Since the

Route 116 right-of-way includes land on either side of the sidewalk, we endorsed the idea of benches in this area where chance encounters could contribute to a sense of community but decided not to allow more of them on the restricted area.

We recommend prohibiting: permanent structures or fixtures (such as cell towers, flag poles, gazebos, fences, signs and lighting), monuments or plaques of any kind, gardens, permanent paths (with the possible exception of a re-established Curtis-Norton path), permanent or otherwise designated parking (vehicles allowed only for the purpose of setting up and delivery for approved events and for maintenance), dumping or storing except in the case of snow removal from the fire department lot, and use of herbicides, pesticides, fungicides or applied chemicals.

We do not recommend an addition to Town Hall for town office space at this time. We believe that if additional space is necessary in the future, it can best be met either by using more of the basement area or by waiting until the emergency services building is improved or a new complex is built.

Although the existence of wetlands on the Norton Hill property does limit what can be done with that piece, some preliminary sketches by Committee members indicate that there is sufficient room outside the restricted area to support other possible uses, such as an expanded emergency services building, off-street parking and/or senior/affordable housing.

The Committee believes these are all important needs but feels strongly that the Town needs to come up with a list of its priorities and a long-range plan before definitive plans can be made

Ann Browning coordinated a major fund-raising effort to support the purchase of the land. Two fund-raising letters, a booth at Fall Festival, donations from the sale of paintings by Elice Davis Pieropan and her painting group and by Walt Cudnohufsky and an auction on November 20 have resulted in gifts and pledges totaling over \$73,000 at the time of this writing. Anna Fessenden has done tireless and greatly appreciated work

for the Committee in keeping track of and computerizing all the monetary gifts and pledges. Fund-raising efforts will continue through 2006, and all donations will be gratefully acknowledged on a commemorative document to be hung in Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Molly Robinson, Chair
Mollie Babize
John Baldwin
Ann Browning
Jacquelyn Burgin
Walter Cudnohufsky
Michael Fitzgerald
Stuart Harris
Tom McCrumm
John Nawrocki
Elice D. Pieropan

Ashfield Town Common Purchase – List of donors as of February 1, 2005

Dear Friends,

Here is the list of those who have contributed to our Town Common Fund. We have tried hard to be accurate, but if you notice any errors -- names left out, misspellings, things worded differently than you wish -- please call Molly Robinson (628-3361) by July 1' 2005. We will use the corrected list to make the permanent document to be hung in Town Hall.

Sincerely,

The Town Center Land Use Committee

Donor(s)	<i>In Honor of</i>	<i>In Memory of</i>
Margaret A. Allen		<i>Stephen Mark Allen & Louise Coreen Allen-Solsbury</i>
Johanna Andersen-Pratt & Jerry Pratt		<i>Theodore (Ted) K. Howes</i>
Anonymous Donor 1	<i>Stephen Hall Snow</i>	
Anonymous Donor 2		
Ashfield Hardware & Supply		
Ashfield Lions Club		
Adam M. Barcroft		
Peter M. & Helen L. Billy		<i>Ann C. Lewkiewicz</i>
Diana Blank		
Elizabeth Blunt & Matt Martin	<i>Martin Blunt</i>	
Donald Boissonnault		<i>Angela Boissonnault</i>
Gail Bolte & Bob Carter		
Ed & Irene Gionti Branson		
Ann Hutt & Preston M. Browning, Jr.		<i>Dorothea Nima Katharine Hutt</i>
Charles Philip & Beyon Buck		
Anne Moen Bullitt		
Cindy Burch & Darlene Monds		
Jacquelyn, Ian & Erika Burgin		<i>Edgar A. Burgin</i>
Elizabeth D. Castro & Andreu Cabré		
Douglas A. & Alise N. Chandler		
Richard M. & Susan K. Chandler		
Danny & Marie DeLuca Chiamis	<i>Dan, Mio & Matt Chiamis</i>	
Elizabeth A. Christenson	<i>My Grandchildren</i>	
Brian & Susan Clark		<i>Pauline Clark</i>

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

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Marcine & Buz Eisenberg	<i>All those who tirelessly serve the town</i>	
Edward D. Etheredge		
Chris Farley & Juliet Jacobson		
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Stuart A. Harris		
William Hoth		<i>Our fallen and mained heroes in Iraq</i>
Marion Miles Howard		
Nelson (Pete) Howes		<i>Emory Howes & Mary P. Howes</i>
Richard R. & Joanne M. Howes		<i>Carol Ann Howes</i>
Hull Forestlands L.P.		
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Alyson Patch		
Theodore M. & Claire V. Pease		
Lucille Currie Pease		<i>Eugene Kelvie Currie & Nora Pugsley Currie</i>
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S. B. Dunlap Smith		
Mary Bartow & John Hall Snow		<i>Stephen Hall Snow & Anita Emmet Hall</i>
Noel & Helen Fessenden Snyder		
Robert S. & Kate Spencer		<i>Jacob who would have played in the field.</i>
Richard & Marguerite Sprague		
St. John's Episcopal Church		
Harold & Laura Stockwell		
Laura Stravino & Lael Boesel	<i>Nicholas Boesel-Stravino</i>	
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Martha D. & Ted Tirk, Jr.		
Richard & Susan B. Todd		
Claire V. Toise		<i>Leo Toise</i>

**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

It is with great pleasure that I submit my seventh report as Superintendent. It is truly amazing how much has been accomplished this year despite the tremendous reduction in state aid. These accomplishments are attributed to the incredible efforts of School Committee members, principals, teachers, and the entire support staff. In addition, Administrative Council members, Local Education Councils (LECs) and Parent Teacher Organizations (PTOs), along with the various subcommittees appointed by the School Committee Chair, Peggy Hart, worked diligently to provide meaningful learning opportunities that focused on raising the achievement of all students. I would be remiss if, at this point, I did not thank Anne Mislak, Principal at Sanderson Academy and Phil Dzialo, Principal of the Mohawk High/Middle School for their tireless work on behalf of their students. Finally, the taxpayers in the nine towns that the Mohawk District serves must be recognized for their generous financial support. It is the combined effort of everyone that has made this such a gratifying year.

We live in an era of high expectations and high accountability. The staff and School Committee embrace the challenges of complying with all of the federal mandates contained in the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*. Some of the challenges are; keeping pace with the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) benchmarks established for all subgroups so every student will be proficient in math and language arts by the year 2014, exceeding the graduation requirements for students passing MCAS, maintaining highly qualified professional staff, and providing the professional development opportunities required by both state and federal regulations. Staying ahead of these challenges requires a comprehensive, coordinated, strategic plan.

To this end, the School Committee developed district goals with benchmarks for determining progress. Principals, working

with staff and LEC members, developed School Improvement Plans that included both district and school initiatives aimed at improving student achievement. Teachers continued to develop lessons that link instruction with the curriculum frameworks and assessment results. The District's Professional Development Plan provided learning opportunities for staff to ensure the successful implementation of the district and school plans. District and school budgets were developed within the limitations of revenue to support student achievement, and the Individual Professional Growth Plan of all educators in the district reflect, in part, the goals of the district and school. However, there is much more work to be done to bring about systemic change. Through the coordinated efforts of Gerhard Stebich of Plainfield, the School Committee is working on a Long Range Plan to guide the district in the years ahead. A final report will be released in the next school year.

The school district continued to experience a slight decline in the elementary student population while the high school continued to experience an increase in its population as the remaining larger elementary grades continue to work their way through the school system. Staff reductions have occurred accordingly in the various schools to reflect this decline in population. However, this trend has presented a new challenge for the School Committee because the elementary schools are no longer at capacity. The School Committee chair appointed a task force, (Building Use Study Committee; BUSC), to examine options for potential school building use in the future. Items likely to be discussed are school consolidation proposals, leasing options, and potential partnerships with businesses and/or organizations to use isolated areas of school facilities and/or Central Office space for revenue generating purposes. More detail will be provided in next year's Town Report.

I am pleased to announce that all schools made AYP in the aggregate and remain on target to meet AYP benchmarks. However, students in the "low income" subgroup and the special education subgroups did not make the benchmark targets. There

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I am pleased to announce that all schools made AYP in the aggregate and remain on target to meet AYP benchmarks. However, students in the "low income" subgroup and the special education subgroups did not make the benchmark targets. There

are some anomalies in NCLB that will require attention; otherwise, it is unlikely that these subgroups will achieve AYP if this is not addressed. For example, only 1% of a graduating class is allowed to take the MCAS alternative test. Because the sizes of graduating classes are relatively small when compared with large urban systems, this resulted in only a few students being allowed to take this alternative test. However, Mohawk has a fairly high special education student population, as determined by specific eligibility requirements. Eleven students qualified to take the alternative test and this exceeded the 1%. Therefore, the district was targeted in not making AYP for this subgroup. I will continue to work with state and federal officials to resolve similar problems that NCLB causes for small rural school districts.

The significant loss in Chapter 70 state aid resulted in increased class sizes. However, thanks to the generous additional support of local taxpayers, the district was able to generally support reasonable class sizes and maintain important programs such as music, art, physical education, and library services. Unfortunately, even with this support, many of the related arts courses were eliminated at the high school and it became necessary to return to “study” periods. Both of these situations are unacceptable to the School Committee and administration, and we will continue to work with our legislators to secure additional state funding. One only needs to look at the wonderful facilities that you have provided and the financial support that you have given over the years to understand your strong commitment to public education. I remain optimistic that the state will fulfill its financial obligation to educate its youth.

There were many awards, commendations and citations of excellence given to both staff and students this year as in previous years. I attempted to mention some examples in last year’s report, but in doing so, I excluded far too many people. Because I was asked to keep this year’s report fairly brief, I will only mention two examples of excellence. First, Stuart Duncan-Smith was the recipient of the Superintendent’s Award and was selected for his many contributions and achievements. His academic

achievements, athletic abilities, and community service made him an excellent choice for this award. Stuart is to be congratulated in striving for excellence, and achieving it. Second, it is noteworthy to bring to your attention that 25% of the graduating class qualified for free tuition at Massachusetts' colleges and universities because of their exceptional performance on the MCAS test. The teaching staff, parents, and residents in all nine towns have every reason to be proud of this significant accomplishment.

During the last couple of years the district began to experience the retirement of veteran staff in increased numbers. We expect this trend to accelerate in the next few years. The challenge will be replacing these veteran professionals with highly qualified and competent staff so that students continue to make notable achievement. Retirements this year included 5 individuals at Mohawk: Mike Ellis, former Math Teacher and Vice Principal, Elaine Carmody, Secretary, Susan Silvester, Library Media Specialists, Betty Stewart, Instructional Assistant, and Bruce Mooney, Business and Social Studies Teacher. Eva Otten, Music Teacher, retired from Buckland- Shelburne Elementary School and Beverly Williams retired from her librarian position at Sanderson Academy. We wish them much happiness in the years ahead.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to all School Committee members for giving unselfishly of their time. I would also like to thank their respective families for sharing and supporting their efforts. Members were: Debra Horton, Molly Robinson and Tom Ulrich of Ashfield; Peggy Hart, Jon Wyman and Joseph Botelho of Buckland; Vicky Lynde, Chet Mitchell and Suzanne Obert of Colrain; Michael Churchill and Richard Ohmann of Hawley; Bob Gruen and Michael Chrisman of Heath; Robert Malone, Julia Aron and Marguerite Willis of Charlemont; Gerhard Stebich and Dudley Williams of Plainfield; Lori Mazanec and Lynn Benander of Shelburne, and Maggie Rice, a non-voting member from Rowe. I have personally benefited from their insight and knowledge of their respective community and

historical understanding of the district.

Also, Rowe residents are to be commended for funding a Spanish and technology position at Mohawk and for providing funds to purchase science textbooks. In total, Rowe provided an additional \$95,000 to support instruction at Mohawk, in addition to their tuition payment. We are fortunate to have them included in the Regional Agreement and it is a privilege for me to serve as your Superintendent in all nine towns. Together, you make this district a success. For more information about the district please visit the website: www.mtrsd.k12.ma.us

Respectfully submitted,
Alan D. Genovese, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

SANDERSON ACADEMY PRINCIPAL REPORT

I hereby submit my report as Principal of Sanderson Academy. In June 2004 our graduates were Skylar Abbatiello, Kristen Aurigemma, Sophie Baskowski, Erik Beniot, Sara Boudreau, Ashley Chao, Kendra Clarke, Stephanie Coutu, Lee Drewitz, Cameron Duchin, Keira Fisher, Alicia Fournier, Dylan Fournier, Caroline Geiling, Nicole Graham, Russell James, Cody Jobst, Dakota Keller, Sinead Keogh, Jeffrey Kernan-Dufresne, Jacob Louison, Dakota Pearson, Kayleen Pepin, Tylor Raulston, Tyler Ribken, Matthew Sabourin, Samantha Shearer, Geordin Soucie, Jessica Stevens, and Kyle Wolfram.

Our total school enrollment on December 1, 2004, totaled 156 students in grades K-6. The number of students at each grade level were as follows: 12 children in kindergarten, 23 children in grade one, 24 children in grade two, grade three totaled 22 students, fourth grade had 18 students, fifth grade had 33 students, and 24 students were in our sixth grade class. There are 111 students from Ashfield and 34 enrolled from Plainfield. We have 3 students who are classified as "school of choice" due to the fact that they were accepted from outside the towns of Ashfield and Plainfield or from outside the Mohawk District towns. All classes are grouped heterogeneously. Our class sizes have increased over the past year with only grade 5 having two classrooms at that grade level. All other grades have one class per grade level. Grants from the Department of Education allowed us to hire a part-time teacher in Grade One and a part-time Instructional Assistant in Kindergarten.

The faculty this year consists of 9 full-time classroom teachers, two special education teachers and one part-time reading teacher. There is a part-time teacher for art. This year our physical education/supplemental physical education teacher and our vocal music teacher and our instrumental music teacher are shared with another elementary school. Specialists providing services in our school include a psychologist three days per week, a speech/

language pathologist for five days per week and an occupational therapist and physical therapist, each for one day per week. There are nine Instructional Assistants that provide additional support in the classrooms and resource room. We have one library assistant for four hours per day who works with individual students and whole classes to instill the love of reading to all. It would be remiss of me not to mention at this time those people who volunteer many hours in different capacities to assist staff and students. These dedicated parents and community members in the classrooms, library, and office make it possible for us to be able to accomplish many of the programs that are so enriching to our students.

The children at Sanderson Academy are offered a broad base of knowledge and learn to appreciate diversity in society. This is accomplished by offering a variety of activities throughout the year. Many of these would not be possible without the assistance of the Ashfield and Plainfield Cultural Councils, the Sanderson Alumni, and the Human Relations Council of Ashfield. Thanks to monies from the PASS Program, classes can attend performances at the UMASS Fine Arts Center and/or the Shea Theater. There are curricula tie-ins as well as the appreciation of the Arts. This PASS money also partially funds an annual field trip to Old Sturbridge Village for the third grade class. We are very fortunate to be able to offer these programs for our students and we are continually grateful for the support of the Cultural Councils of our member towns of Ashfield and Plainfield. The PTO continues as a strong fundraising organization and meets on a monthly basis. This past fall two successful fundraisers of assorted items and pies raised \$4,000 for the school. There was also a Holiday Boutique for the children to purchase items. The Penny Drive, Pizza Sale and Sixties Dance were very successful once again. There are cookbooks, T-Shirts, book bags, mugs, and prints of Sanderson Academy on sale at all times in the lobby of the school. The Mary Lyon Gift Catalog continues to be a resource for us by providing materials and labor as requested by various staff members. We sincerely thank each and every group and individual who has made our school experience richer for the

students.

The LEC (Local Education Council) has representatives from the teaching staff and parents, and community. In the School Improvement Plan our goals are to maintain High Academic Expectations of students through the Professional Development of the staff, to create smaller class sizes, to explore new ways to create a positive school climate, and to ensure the safety of the entire school community. The LEC is the group within the school that develops and then ensures the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.

Sanderson Academy has an active Student Council with representation from each classroom in grades five and six. Fifth and sixth grade students also serve during the year as Peer Mediators. The Peer Mediator Program has chosen and trained students who serve as needed as conflict managers during the school year. Escuela Lomas Altas in Mexico City and Sanderson Academy continued our Mexican Exchange Program with 9 students traveling from Sanderson to Mexico chaperoned by Don Spearance last February. In April twelve students from Mexico City spent two weeks experiencing rural life in Ashfield and Plainfield. The fifth grade, with the help of parents and much fundraising spent a week at Keewaydin Environmental Education Camp in Salisbury, Vermont, a true hands-on science experience. The fifth and sixth grade students can begin involvement with an instrument. We hold two Band Concerts, have District Band, and Franklin County Music Festival that our students participate in and enjoy. Students can expand vocally also as they are involved in assemblies as well as the Middle School Musical. Students can begin to learn the basics of soccer and basketball with after school programs in the fall and winter.

The Sanderson Safety Committee has been in existence for the past four years. The goals of this committee is to assist in providing a safe, secure environment for the Sanderson community. Programs on weapon and fire safety are held at the school. Emergency procedures are developed and practiced during the school year. A safe school environment today is more

than just fire drills once a month! The Safety Committee's members are representatives from the towns of Ashfield and Planfield and include Police Department personnel, Fire Department personnel, parents and Sanderson Academy staff.

School-wide we also participated in many projects: Winter Carnival Days, Field Day, Mountain Day, and Grounds Clean-Up Day. Throughout the past school year the students were involved in some all-school projects. Our fourth Art Show was held and each student displayed at least one piece from the school year. The school resembled an art gallery of fantastic proportions. Each month we gather together in Morning Meeting Assembly. Sometimes there is sharing by a class or grade and other times I get their full attention. This is an opportunity to be together as a school community. We celebrated "Read Across America" with a birthday cake for Dr. Seuss and listened to stories with classroom buddies. Our morning concluded with an assembly about Dr. Seuss and the importance of reading hosted by a group of Mohawk High School students. Each month "Buddy Classes" have paired up and participated in many activities such as reading together, hiking together and more throughout the school year. The character traits of respect, responsibility, caring, sharing, courage, honesty, patience, imagination, determination, and humor are again being incorporated into our daily school life. We now have a signal of raising our right hand and saying "Give Me 5". This means: eyes on speaker, ears listening, bodies still, mouths closed and hands free. This is universally used by everyone in the building. Each class continues to invite their families to lunch. These family luncheons include a presentation within the classroom or for the entire school followed by lunch together in the school cafeteria.

The bottom line to all the projects and studies is accountability as directed by the Department of Education's Education Reform Act. District Curriculum Standards have been developed which are based on the Curriculum Frameworks from the state. The MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) was taken at the fourth grade level again this past May.

The curricula areas tested were Reading, Writing, and Math. Results were available in September. Students in Grade four have now taken seven rounds of these tests. Now we are able to compare results from each year, document strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan to improve our scores in all areas. The LEC continues to offer evening workshops for parents and students to help prepare for these tests. This spring grade three will again take a Reading MCAS, grade five will take a Science/Technology MCAS, grade six will take a Math MCAS, and grade four will be taking the English/Language Arts 9ELA and Math MACAS tests. Question try-outs will be given in Math and English/Language Arts at grade five and six this year.

There is a Before-School and an After School Program which runs Monday through Friday with many activities offered for all age groups. A childcare component as well as specific enrichment programs spanning a five to six week period are offered to the students. There is a fee for some programs while others are free or at a reduced cost.

We have continued, with your help, to provide opportunities for our students once again in spite of the budget crisis. Thank you for being so supportive.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Marie Mislak
Principal

CARL H. NILMAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The fund was established under the provisions of the will of Carl H. Nilman for the purpose of providing scholarships. Recipients shall be graduates of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School who desire and are deemed worthy of post high school education or training and who are in need of financial assistance.

This year the Awards subcommittee read 119 applications. 54 were from seniors and 65 from previous graduates of Mohawk. \$30,000 was to be awarded using 30% for seniors and 70% for graduates. The committee feels that seniors have multiple scholarship opportunities from other sources, while graduates have far fewer resources. 24 scholarships totaling \$9,000 were awarded to seniors (44% of applicants). 35 scholarships totaling \$21,000 were given to graduates (54% of applicants). The awards committee was Pauline Mills (Buckland), Marion Scott (Buckland), Marge Porrevecchio (Charlemont), Alicia Tripp (Heath), and Michelle Hillman (Colrain).

From 1991-2003, a total of \$162,875 has been awarded to Mohawk Seniors. \$361,175 has been awarded to Mohawk graduates for a total scholarship amount of \$524,050.

Other members of the committee are: Richard Bole, Sarah Rich, Julia Aron, Robert Gruen, Ken Chaffee, Karen Sovieke, Carolyn Taylor, David Engle, Marguerite Willis and Sheila Graves.

The Mohawk community owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Nilman for his foresight in supporting higher education for the students of Mohawk Trail Regional High School. The committee members are honored to bring the wishes of his will to fruition.

Students of any age who are graduates of Mohawk are encouraged to apply for scholarships to help meet their continuing educations needs. Call the Guidance Office at Mohawk for information regarding requirements and deadlines.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle F. Hillman
Secretary

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2004

May 3, 2003 Annual Town Mtg	Transfer/Borrow	Taxation	Free Cash	Available Fds	Special Fds
GENERAL GOVERNMENT					
Accountant		\$ 10,000.00			
Appeals Board		\$ 650.00			
Assessors' Expenses		\$,128.00			
Audit & Accounting		\$ 5,000.00			
Bonds		\$ 1,000.00			
Computer/Internet Support		\$ 1,000.00			
Conservation Commission		\$ 1,705.00			
Elections		\$ 1,600.00			
Insurance (town buildings/off. liability)		\$ 25,000.00			
Office Expenses		\$ 4,790.00			
Office Supplies		\$ 5,100.00			
Planning Board		\$ 1,650.00			
Postage		\$ 1,000.00			
Registrars of Voters		\$ 800.00			
Select Board Expenses		\$ 400.00			
Street Lists		\$ 1,050.00			
Town Administrator		\$ 32,000.00			
Municipal Town Clerk		\$ 22,620.00			
Town Clerk Expenses		\$ 1,700.00			
Town Collector		\$ 14,420.00			
Town Collector Expenses		\$ 8,083.00			
Town Counsel		\$ 7,000.00			
Town Hall Maintenance		\$ 3,775.00			
Town Hall Utilities		\$ 9,500.00			
Town Hall Painting (Fred Cross)				\$ 2,000.00	
TOWN OFFICER SALARIES					
Select Board Chair		\$ 1,500.00			
Select Board, member (2@\$1250.00)		\$ 2,500.00			
Assessor Chair		\$ 1,500.00			
Assessor (2@\$1250.00)		\$ 2,500.00			
Moderator		\$ 100.00			
Town Reports		\$ 2,600.00			
Treasurer		\$ 9,785.00			
Treasurer's Expenses		\$ 2,590.00			
Total		\$ 240,046.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -
EDUCATION					
School Committee (3@\$450)		\$ 1,350.00			
Mohawk Trail K-12 District - Operating		\$ 1,252,867.00			
Capital		\$ 127,165.00			
Vocational		\$ 215,338.00			
Total		\$ 1,596,720.00			
Reserve Fund			\$ 12,000.00		
Stabilization			\$ 80,000.00		

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

	Transfer/Borrow	Taxation	Free Cash	Available Fds	Special Fds
PUBLIC SAFETY					
Franklin County Inspector Program		\$ 26,173.00			
Animal Control - Expenses		\$ 550.00			
Salary		\$ 1,339.00			
Emergency Manager Expense		\$ 300.00			
Fire Chief's Salary		\$ 1,750.00			
Fire Chief Expenses		\$ 400.00			
Fire Department Expenses		\$ 23,135.00			
Fire Department Utilities		\$ 7,434.00			
Fire Protection		\$ 550.00			
Fuel Expenses: Fire		\$ 950.00			
Ambulance		\$ 500.00			
Highway		\$ 21,500.00			
Police		\$ 4,000.00			
Police Chief Salary		\$ 40,606.00			
Police Department		\$ 51,914.00			
Police Department Utilities		\$ 2,400.00			
Drug/Alcohol Testing		\$ 800.00			
Tree Warden: Expenses		\$ 6,500.00			
Salary		\$ 300.00			
Total		\$ 191,101.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
NEW & CAPITAL					
Fire. Equip.(Federal Matching Grant)			\$ 5,400.00		
Highway Truck			\$ 40,000.00		
Ashfield Water District		\$ 2,000.00			
Council on Aging Van			\$ 1,000.00		
Total		\$ 2,000.00	\$ 46,400.00	\$ -	\$ -
Belding Park Restoration			\$ 10,000.00		
HIGHWAY & ROADS					
General Highway		\$ 118,850.00			
Machinery Maintenance		\$ 69,460.00			
Highway Department Utilities		\$ 6,550.00			
Street Lights		\$ 3,600.00			
Highway Superintendent's Salary		\$ 41,405.00			
Winter Roads		\$ 106,000.00			
Total		\$ 345,865.00			
CULTURAL/RECREATION					
Belding Memorial Library			\$ 30,589.00		
Belding Memorial Park			\$ 14,350.00		
Cultural Council		\$ 500.00			
Historical Commission		\$ 475.00			
Human Relations Council		\$ 500.00			
Memorial Day		\$ 800.00			
Youth Activities			\$ 10,000.00		
Total		\$ 2,275.00	\$ 54,939.00		

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

	Transfer/Borrow	Taxation	Free Cash	Available Fds	Special Fds
SANITATION					
Hilltown Resource Management		\$ 6,944.00			
Inspector of Animals		\$ 350.00			
Transfer Station		\$ 73,700.00			
Transfer Station Utilities		\$ 800.00			
Total		\$ 81,794.00			
HEALTH SERVICES					
Foothills Health District		\$ 13,591.00			
Health Board Expenses		\$ 600.00			
Health Bd Salary (3@ \$450)		\$ 1,350.00			
Total		\$ 15,541.00			
HUMAN SERVICES					
Care of Soldiers' Graves		\$ 1,000.00			
Council on Aging			\$ 11,413.00		
Local Council on Aging			\$ 500.00		
Veterans' Benefits		\$ 1,000.00			
Veterans' Benefits Adm.		\$ 2,555.00			
Total		\$ 4,555.00	\$ 11,913.00	\$ -	\$ -
SEWER EXPENSES/ENTERPRISE FUND					
Salaries and Benefits				Enterprise Fd	\$ 56,341.00
Fixed Operating Costs					\$ 5,800.00
Volume Based Costs					\$ 57,200.00
Debt Service: Principal					\$ 9,944.20
Interest					\$ 5,680.09
Emergency Reserve Fund					\$ 5,000.00
Total					\$ 139,965.29
DEBT SERVICE					
Sewer Debt: Principal		\$ 23,203.00			
Interest		\$ 13,260.00			
Long Term Debt Total					
Interest on Short Term Debt		\$ 5,000.00			
Total		\$ 41,463.00			
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS					
Health Insurance		\$ 65,000.00			
Medicare/FICA		\$ 7,500.00			
Retirement System		\$ 58,737.00			
Retiree Benefit - Health		\$ 6,000.00			
Uniforms - Highway Department		\$ 2,500.00			
Retirement Incentive		\$ 800.00			
Sick Leave		\$ 4,414.00			
Unemployment		\$ 2,500.00			
Vacations/Personal/Bereavement		\$ 19,000.00			
Worker's Compensation		\$ 12,309.00			
Employee Training		\$ 400.00			
Total		\$ 179,160.00			

TOWN OF ASHFIELD 2004 ANNUAL REPORT

	Transfer/Borrow	Taxation	Free Cash	Available Fds	Special Fds
Franklin Regional Council of Govern- ments					
Core Assessment		\$ 13,160.00			
Engineering		\$ 1,200.00			
Procurement		\$ 2,460.00			
Resource Development		\$ 500.00			
Total		\$ 17,320.00			
TOTALS		\$ 2,717,840.00	\$ 215,252.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 139,965.29
November 17, 2003 Special Town Meeting					
Transfer Station			\$ 2,778.20		
Belding Memorial Library			\$ 43.20		
Highway Facility (from Grant Program Income)				\$ 7,000.00	
Fire Dept Surplus Truck (Insurance/Property)				\$ 351.00	
Highway Dept Surplus Truck (Insurance/Property)				\$ 351.00	
Police Department			\$ 1,298.00		
O'Donnell Property (borrow)	\$ 200,000.00				
TOTALS	\$ 200,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,119.40	\$ 7,702.00	\$ -
Special Town Meeting May 1, 2004					
Winter Roads Account (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 12,834.87	
General Highway Account (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 6,444.00	
Town Counsel Account (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 5,000.00	
Computer/Internet Account (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 1,000.00	
Town Hall Maintenance Account (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 3,000.00	
Assessors Expense (transfer from Vocational Education Assessment Account)				\$ 10,500.00	
Allowance for Abatelements for FY2004 (transfer from Reserve for Released Overlay)				\$ 6,491.17	
TOTALS				\$ 45,270.04	

SEWER COMMISSION

This has been both a productive and difficult year for the wastewater treatment plant. Early in the year we used some of our retained earnings to implement some capital improvements to the facility, which has made it both easier to run and safer for the operator. During the year the plant has operated well, with no major problems to report. We also fixed one leaking manhole on Norton Hill Rd. in an effort to reduce infiltration of rain and ground water into the sewer. Infiltration remains a problem, which we hope to address this coming season.

Our difficulties started some months ago when our operator, Betty Nichols was stricken with giardia and has been out ever since. Even though seriously ill, she remained in constant touch with the part-time operators at the plant and has taken the responsibility to keep it running smoothly. Special thanks are due to Keith Gammel and to Stan Andrukonis who have worked in Betty's place. We are hoping that Betty can return to us in the near future.

One other difficult period came during the fire at the Belding mansion. Over 35,000 gallons of water entered the sewer pipes and all but flooded the treatment plant. Fortunately, our surge tanks held the overflow and a disaster was averted. We think the water came through a floor drain in the building. We will also be checking for more of these connections during the next year.

We do not expect any big differences in the budget for the coming year and will try to keep it as level as we can. Hopefully, some progress will be made on a replacement for the existing plant, but time will only tell.

Our best to Betty and wishes for a speedy recovery.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Perlman
Tom Carter
Mary Fitz-Gibbon
Sewer Commissioners

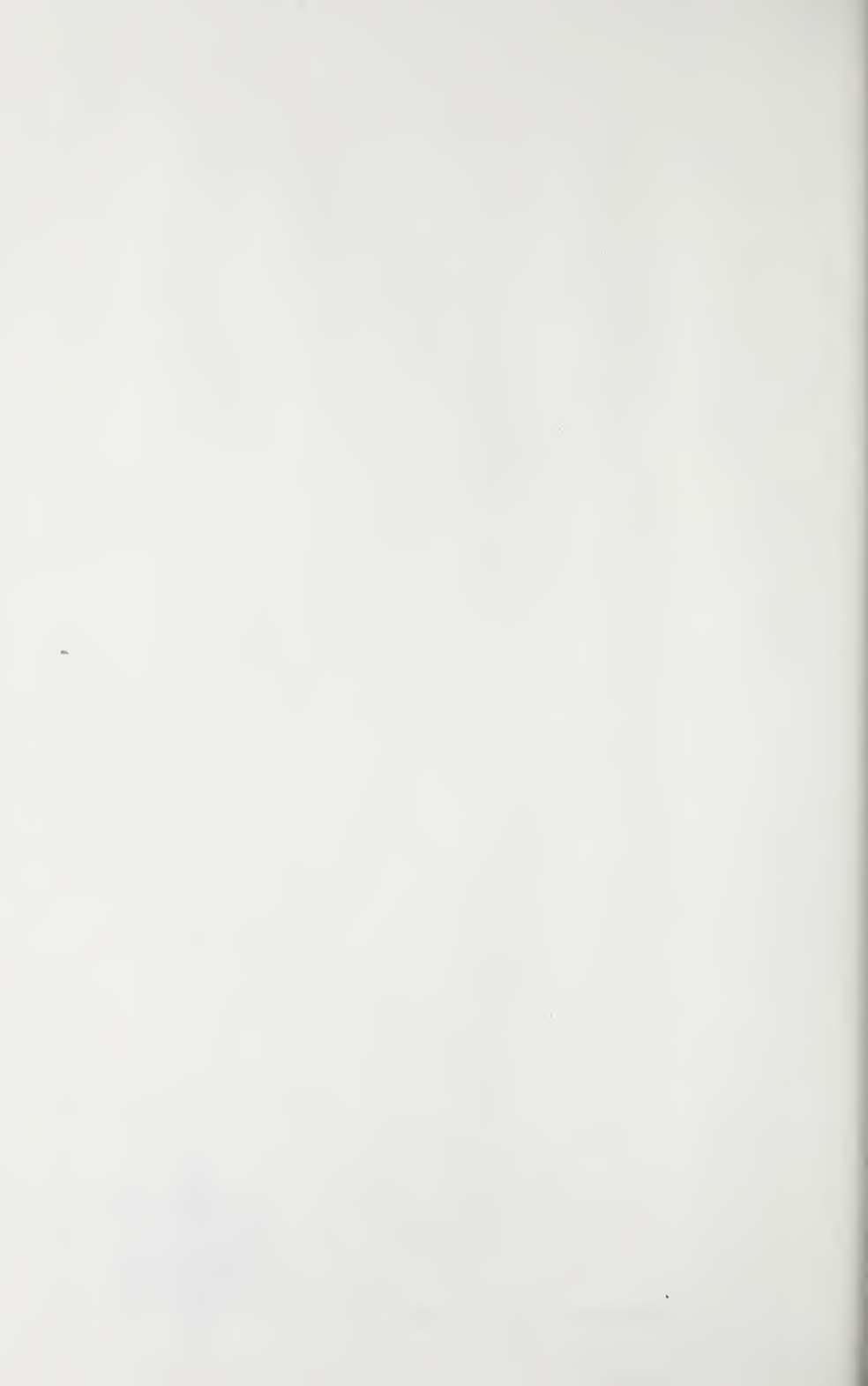




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